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ABSTRACT

Three articles discuss aspects of current foreign language instruction in Hungary. "Foreign Languages in Hungarian Schools Today" (Karoly Fulop) surveys the current status of second language instruction, the developments made since reforms were recommended in 1972 and 1979, and possible directions for further development. It looks first at Russian instruction in elementary and secondary schools and then outlines characteristics of second language instruction in general in various school types, including vocational and teacher education programs. Some statistical data are included. "Foreign Language Education in Hungary" (Gyozo Sipoczy) outlines the short- and long-term objectives of the 1979 reforms and describes the current state of instruction at all levels (elementary, secondary, higher, teacher, and adult education). "State Language Examinations in Hungary: A Survey on Levels, Requirements and Methods" (Jeno Bardos) describes the system and instruments for testing language proficiency at three levels. The examinations are administered in common and uncommon languages to anyone over the age of 15 years applying for proficiency certification. The formats, objectives, and topics recommended for study in preparation for the examination are outlined, and the criteria for evaluating performance are summarized for each test type. (MSE)

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Bulletin

National Institute of Education

Hungary

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LANGUAGE TEACHING IN HUNGARY

National Institute of Education

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Dr. Károly Fülöp

FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN HUNGARIAN SCHOOLS TODAY

In recent years foreign language teaching has become a key issue in Hungarian society. The development of international relations in the areas of economics, politics, academics, and culture as well as the welcome increase in international tourism place increasingly greater demands on experts in these fields to speak foreign languages and create the need for Hungarians to be able to communicate in a foreign language either abroad or in Hungary. This increasing demand is a natural result of the openness of Hungary's economic and social system and the dynamic development of Hungary's importance in the world.

Public opion expects foreign language teaching in the schools to provide the students with language knowledge and skills and to meet a wide range of expectations. Students with an elementary and secondary school background, for example, are expected to be able to communicate in a foreign language in simple everyday situations, to be able to understand special literature pertaining to their chosen field or profession, and to be able to act as guides or interpreters on occasion. On the other hand, those students who plan to attend a college or university are expected to have acquired an adequate knowledge of the language itself, its literature and stylistics.

Considering the economic situation and the personal and material resources available, the schools alone are unable to satisfy this multitude of diverse demands. The public must realize and be made to realize that it is the joint responsibility of the schools, other public educational institutions and the family to provide the majority of students with a language proficiency of a useful level.

In the case of foreign language teaching, as in the case of other subjects as well, the schools are merely able to provide the great majority of students with the basics, which can then be expanded upon by ambitious students willing to sacrifice extra

time and energy in special courses at school or elsewhere in order to attain the type and level of language knowledge most fitting to their individual needs. It is indisputable that the schools should play the major role in this. However, this can only be accomplished if the educational and instructional efforts of the teaching staff are reinforced by the personal interest of the students are willing to take on extra work and if the opportunies for learning languages outside the school are increased and exploited.

Even after taking into account the intrinsic possibilities open to the schools, neither language teachers themselves nor educational administrators are satisfied with the results achieved have long recognized the problems and difficulties and are searching for the means to achieved better results.

The 1972 party resolution on educational policy also dealt with the issue of foreign language teaching in the schools and advocated improvements in this area. Six years later in January of 1979 the Agitprop Committee of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party again dealt with the issue and ascertained that in spite of the significant progress achieved since the 1960's the results still fell short of meeting the needs.

The Commitee deemed it imperative that the level of language teaching be raised through improving the training and continuing education of teachers and through the introduction of more modern teaching materials, methods and teaching aids. Several months later the Committee for Academic Policy also debated the question and issued a resolution calling for the overall modernization of language teaching at all levels and in all the various institutions. The Ministry of Education and Culture then drew up a series of measures based on the documentation cited by the political committees for the improvement of language teaching, including the specific tasks to be carried out by the appropriate institutions, organizations and public bodies.

In the past four years a great number of these measures have been implemented: others, however, are still far from being realized. The following survey attempts to provide a realistic down-

to-earth picture of the complex situation and the possible paths for further development.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The Russian Language

Despite the widely-recognized achievements wrought since the 1949 public education reform, by the early 1980's it was precisely the Russian language teaching in elementary schools which was most in need of reform. An out-dated curriculum unrealistic teaching goals, conservative teaching methods, lifeless teaching of Russian in elementary schools. A complete regereration required simultaneous reforms in numerous areas, even the moderate goals of which took years to accomplish.

i.The new curriculum was published in 1978, which incorporated many changes in various areas. For example, the teaching of Russian was begun one year earlier, in the 4th grade of elementary school, and a more modest, realistic goal was formulated: to provide the students with the basics of the language by the end of their studies. /This was made formally possible by the new state language examination reform introduced in March, 1981 offering state language examinations at the elementary level./ The new curriculum also stressed the importance of the new theory of cummunicative language teaching and knowledge and specified the basic principles of methodology used in modern language teaching. The requirements were also made to conform more closely to various needs, and directed that uniform, systematic teaching materials and aids be developed and used.

ii.Following a widl-ranging selection system, new experimental Russian textbooks were prepared and were introduced in 30 schools for testing.

iii. Following a thorough evaluation by experts in education and other fields, the final version of the 4th grade Russian textbook was prepared.

iv. In order to introduce the concepts of the new curriculum and textbooks to the teachers, a widespread continuing education

program was launched through various publications and educational television as well as at central and regional courses during the school year and the summer months.

v. By the time the new syllabus was introduced in the classroom, the most important auxiliary teaching aids /a teachers' book, audiovisual aids/ had also been prepared.

For the first time in the history of Russian language teaching in Hungary, all the above-mentioned tasks were carried out simultaneously as opposed to one after the other. In spite of this /or because of this?/ there was a one-year delay in the introduction of the new syllabus, which went into effect in 1982 in the 4th grade.

The simultaneous introduction of all these reforms, albeit a necessary prerequisite for the teaching of Russian in the 4th gradl to be conducted according to the new concepts, carried the inherent risk of later difficulties encountered.

i. The lengthy process for selecting new experimental 4th grade textbooks had to be begun while the new curriculum was still in the planning stage. Consequently, the authors received the final version of the curriculum only after the first drafts of their manuscripts had already been submitted to the publishers.

ii. Following the one-year trial period, more time would have been needed to take into full account the criticisms based on experience, to integrate the two experimental versions, and to rectify the conflicts in concepts. The final version of the textbook was prepared in haste.

iii. The most important auxiliary teaching aids were prepared in a similar manner. They include: a series of slides with accompanying recorded texts, a teachers' book, visual aids used in teaching the Cyrillic alphabet, and recorded songs.

The continuing education of the teachers was /and still is/ conducted for the most part without the necessary aids. This is the price which had to and will have to be paid for a time to come for the simultaneous introduction of these reforms. In spite of these drawbacks, the efforts spent in introducing the new

reforms have borne satisfactory results, and it is generally thought that spreading the process out over several years would not have achieved the desired results.

The initial steps in the reform process can be considered encouragingly successful. The teaching of Russian in the 4th grade has been introduced in all schools throughout the country, employing 4200 teachers in the 5000 classes. The level of professional training of the teachers in higher than had been anticipated: 71,1% of them majored in Russian at the university, 9.7% specialized in Russian at teacher training colleges, and only 13.2% have no professional training in Russian. The latter group consists mainly of teachers in small ungraded schools /whose classes consist of two or more grades/. These teachers have attended special training courses and receive special teaching aids /recorded teaching programs/.

Almost without exception, the school principals and the council departments in charge of elementary school affairs ensured the best possible teaching staff for the introduction of Russian language teaching in the 4th grade. This can only be fully appreciated if we realize that in that same year the overall number of teachers decreased and in some counties /Budapest, Pest, Vas, Veszprém/ a decrease in the number of Russian teachers was experienced.

It has generally been found that the students in the 4th grade are enthusiastic about studying Russian, like the textbooks and classes, and learn quickly during the colorful, playful atmosphere created during the lessons. The same reaction has been observed on the part of the parents as well. The majority of the teachers are enthusiastic, ambitious and full of ideas, and feel motivated to apply the new teaching methods set down in the syllabus in their lessons. The teaching of Russian on the whole has been rejuvenated and the effects of the new teaching aids and methods can be felt in the other grades as well. Although due to the progressive introduction of the new material, the old teaching material must still be used in grades 5-8, the teachers attempt to apply the new teaching methods and to bridge the unavoidable gap between

the modern curriculum and the old textbooks. Consequently, the results achieved in grades 5-8 have also improved somewhat.

At the time the new syllabus was introduced numerous problems were encountered due in part to circumstances beyond the schools' control.

i. Due to the well-konwn lack of classrooms and demographic conditions, the separating of 4th grade Russian classes into smaller groups was impossible in the first school year /Of the 5000 classes throughout the country, only 122 were divided into half: none at all were divided in Budapest and seven counties./ For similar reasons, the number of classrooms reserved especially for Russian lessons in decreasing rapidly, a problem which most often affects the 4th graders.

ii. As a result of the cyclical class schedule introduced after elimination of lessons on Saturdays, it frequently occurs that a week or even more passes between two Russian lessons, an unfavourable factor in language teaching. Lessons must also often be scheduled very early in the morning or at the end of the school day.

iii. Many schools received the completed AV aids extremely late and with great difficulty. In March of 1983 there were still schools which had not yet received these essential teaching aids for the 4th grade.

iv. The price of haste can be seen in the textbooks as well. There is an above-average number of editorial and printing errors in them. Although the textbook was well received and its merits are widely recognized, several parts have been criticized.

As a result of all this, many teachers are tense, overworked and anxious about the deficiencies. Their time and energy is for the most part spent trying to surmount the difficulties mentioned and they often have little time left to make full use in their teaching of the potential merits to be found in the new modern textbook and other teaching aids. These teachers, through no fault of their own, are unable to achieve the highest possible results.

Special Russian classes

For 23 years since the 1960/61 school year, Hungarian elementary schools have provided students with the opportunity to learn Russian in special classes. The initial 102 schools offering such an option have increased to 273 today, with the greatest rise seen in the last ten years. /See Appendix 1./

Students choosing this option begin their study of the Russian language in the 3rd grade and have 3,3,5,5,5,5, lessons a week /or as of September 1982 the equivalent number in the 10-day cyclical class schedule/ in grades 3-8 respectively. In the present school year* 273 schools, less than 10% of the total number of schools, offer special Russian classes, which 3.3% /28,000/ of the elementary school children from this age group attend. As a result of the support and financial backing of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the number of special classes has begun to show a slight increase. Unfortunately, however, the separation of such classes into smaller groups, an objective of prime importance, has not been accomplished to a satisfactory degree in this as in other areas as well. The situation has not improved significantly since the 1981 resolution issued by the Ministry which made possible the formation of special combined classes. Due to problems in scheduling, made worse by the elimination of Saturday lessons, the Russian lessons of classes of this type can only be scheduled in the early morning or late afternoon hours. As special classes in any event entail extra work and time, school principals are often reluctant to organize special combined classes.

It is lamentable that the regional distribution of schools offering special Russian classes is far from uniform. One-quarter can be found in the capital city of Budapest, with an additional one-half located in county seats.

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*1983/84 /editor/

Second foreign languages

It was a major accomplishment in the history of education in Hungary when the education reform of 1949 made the study of one foreign language /Russian/ complusory for all students aged 10-14. This achievement, however, was followed only after many years by the further opportunity to learn a second foreign language in elementary school. English, German and French were taught for the first time in the 1965/66 school year in 10,10 and 3 elementary school respectively in the upper classes. Compared to this /and solely if compared to this!/ the teaching of second foreign languages has gained considerable ground. The number of schools offering the three initial languages has increased thirteenfold /tenfold, sevenfold/ respectively in the last twelve years, and new languages have been added: Esperanto and Italian in 1968, Spanish and Polish in 1980. An especially striking and welcome development is the dramatic increase in the last two years of the number of students studying English and German: the former has increased by 150%, the latter has almost doubled. /See Appendix./

Second foreign language teaching in elementary schools, looking at the entire age group as a whole, is still insignificant. The overall availability, the choice of languages, the possibilities for continuing the study of the language, the number of teachers and the quality of the teaching material and aids are all far from satisfactory. The major problems and deficiencies are outlined below:

1. The numerical increase mentioned above is merely relative, as only 1.6% of the students in the relevant age group study English, 1% study German, .003% /!/ study French and the number of students studying the remaining languages is barely measurable statistically. In other words, only 3% of this age group study a second foreign language now. It we consider the fact that 9-12% of the students from the same age group were taught two foreign languages in Hungary prior to WWII, then a completely different view of this progress is obtained. Today approximately one-third as many students in the 10-14 year age group study two foreign languages in school as did 40-50 years ago.

2. The number of languages taught in elementary schools is absolute and on a national level is satisfactory: two languages can be chosen. In reality, however, no true freedom of choice exists as the 262 elementary schools offering a second foreign langauge teach only one language or another. No improvement can be foreseen as long as the percentage of schools offering a second language does not even account for 10% of the total. The parents are happy to be able to enroll their children in a special language class at all and do not even think of the possibility of choosing which language they schould learn.

3. The relative frequency of languages taught appears to be satisfactory and is numerically more or less realistic English occupies first place, followed by German. The number of French classes is disporportionately small even if it is taken into consideration that French has lost much of its prestige as a world language. The absence, however, of the Latin language is striking. Its role as an important gateway to education and culture would warrant the teaching of Latin in several elementary schools. The relatively early introduction of Esperanto, well-received internationally, is both interesting and adds color to the elementary school education. The introduction of the Polish language in a school in Debrecen is a welcome initiative with political merit. It is unfortunate that the languages of other peoples both near and far have not yet found a place in the elementary schools, with the exception of special schools for minorities living in Hungary.

4. In addition to the quantitative deficiencies described above, foreign language teaching in elementary schools is also plagued by another problem: the geographical distribution of schools offering a second foreign language is extremely poor. 75% of the schools teaching English are located either in Budapest or in county seats. In the case of German the percentage is somewhat smaller /61% of such schools are located in Budapest or county seats/, while 90% of schools offering French can be found in these areas. It is striking that, for example, in Tolna County not one school offers a second foreign language whereas in all of

Nógrád County there are only schools offering German. It is easily discernible that due to this large groups of students are excluded from studying second foreign languages in the schools.

5. It is a common problem that students who studied a second foreign language in elementary school are unable to continue their study of that language in secondary school, or if so then not in special classes, although formally the possibility does exist. It is well known that advanced classes can be formed for these students, providing them with 5 lessons a week. In reality, however, the percentage of students continuing their intensive study of the second language is low. Only every other elementary school student attending special English or German classes continues his studies in an advanced class, whereas only every 8th student of French attends an advanced class in secondary school.* The chances for students attending secondary vocational schools to continue their studies are even poorer, while those students choosing to attend secondary technical schools for skilled workers have virtually no possibility at all. It is apparent from all this that the efforts expended by elementary school students to learn a second foreign language are in a significant percentage of cases either disproportionate with the advantage gained or completely wasted.

6. A problem directly related to all this is the lack of sufficient language teachers in the elementary schools. As a result of the dialectical interrelationship of cause and effect, the choice of whether to teach or not to teach a certain language - with some exceptions - depends on mere chance. In the decision to offer or not to offer special language classes, planning plays little part. Rather, the issue is decided by what languages the teachers employed by the school can teach. Inseparable from this is the fact that teaching in an elementary school does not hold great promises for most language teachers even though the teacher training colleges at Pécs, Eger and Szombathely have been training German and English elementary school teachers for decades.

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*Figures from the 1982/83 school year.

New possibilities in the area of second foreign language teaching in elementary schools will be opened by the elective classes to be formed for grades 7 and 8 beginning in 1984. It must, however, be noted that experiments in elective studies of a second foreign language have shown that the 2 lessons a week are of very low effectiveness, despite the supposedly strong motivation of the students and that this is merely sufficient to provide the students with a general picture of the language and the culture of the land where it is spoken. In short, the students are given a taste of what could be learnt if they chose to continue their studies more seriously in secondary school.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The new foreign language curricula were introduced in secondary schools between 1978 and 1982 depending on the type of school. Although the teaching material was favorably received, its effectiveness has been greatly hindered by the fact that accompanying teaching aids were published with a one to two year delay or are still to be published due to problems arising in compiling, publication and production as well as distribution.

The great majority of secondary school students received no instruction in a second foreign language at elementary school and must begin their studies at secondary school from scratch. It is internationally accepted in teaching circles that 500 lessons are generally necessary to acquire elementary oral skills. 3 language lessons a week over the four years of secondary school in Hungary amounts to a mere 350 lessons altogether, although if the Russian lessons attended in elementary school are regarded /with great optimism/ as having provided the students with a firm basis from which to continue, then a total of 700-800 lessons is obtained in the case of Russian. In the case of Western languages, with no previous studies, the total falls far short of the necessary 500. Of the entire population of this age group, only every fourth or fifth 14-16-year-old student has the opportunity to get a taste of a Western language, and only every sixth or seventh secondary school student has the chance to study

a foreign language intensively enough to come close to acquiring elementary language proficiency. It is only in advanced classes and special language classes that students achieve a level of language knowledge in the schools which can truly be used as a means of cummunication. This means that only every twentieth 14-18-year-old student in our present school system is afforded a realistic opportunity to acquire the ability to communicate in a foreign language. This situation is far from satisfactory.

Significant progress in the dividing of classes into small groups for language lessons has only been achieved in the case of Russian language teaching at secondary vocational schools, where the percentage of small classes 10 years ago was 14.5%. Today this figure is 84.3%. The dividing of classes in high schools has come to a standstill. The main reasons for this are obvious:

i. The shortage of Russian, English and German teachers is no longer the sole problem of small towns but plagues large cities as well, including even Budapest.

ii. Many teachers take advantage of maternity or childcare leave*. Replacing these teachers, if at all possible, is extremely difficult. In the event other teachers at the school substitute for them, their increased work lead does not allow for the further burden of dividing the classes into small groups.

iii. The classroom shortage, the increase in the number of school-age children, and the need to use existing classrooms for elective classes all add to the list of obstacles.

An important complement to foreign language teaching is the summer language camp. Three-week Russian language camps have been organized in Hungary for ten years and for twelve years Hungary has organized camps in the Soviet Union. Aid is provided in both instances by the Soviet Union, who sends both teachers and students

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*Mothers in Hungary have the option of staying at home with their children until they reach the age of three and receive an allowance from the state during this period.

to participate. In addition to the centrally-organized camps, various counties /Bács-Kiskun, Fejér, Tolna, Veszprém, Zala/ have also slowly joined in the organizing of summer language camps.

Of the 26 Hungarian schools associated with UNESCO, ten have organized language camps. Although undoubtedly useful, the brevity of these 7-10 day camps restricts their effectiveness. Should students' expenditure be covered or shared in accordance with family income, the length of the camps could be increased.

The innovation of Bács-Kiskun County is worth mentioning. It organizes English language camps patterned after the Russian camps, as well as construction language camps in Russian, English and German with young participants from abroad /Bulgaria, East Germany, Denmark, etc./ where natural spontaneous situations for speaking in the foreign language occur, leading to improvement in the oral skills of the students.

Although the inclusion of native speakers in the secondary school would be highly beneficial, only two such programs exist at present. One native English teacher is employed at Sárospatak and one native French teacher teaches at Szentes.

The new regulations governing the state language examination which allow students to take the examination, including the new elementary level examination, from the age of 15, have resulted in increased interest in learning foreign languages. In connection with this, many have questioned why the new regulations determining the foreign language examination at the end of the secondary school and the new requirements on the state language examination have not been better co-ordinated. In the minds of many, steps should be taken to make the state language examination equivalent to the corresponding final examination and vice-versa.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LANGUAGE TEACHING IN VARIOUS SCHOOLS

High schools*

After finishing elementary school, 25.5% of the students

*U.K.: grammer schools

continue their studies in high schools. It is undisputable that as regards learning a foreign language, these students are in a relatively advantageous position.

At the same time as the new curricula were prepared, work was begun on new textbooks. The general textbooks and those for elective courses in English, French, German and Italian were completed on schedule. It has, however, caused difficulties that the planned textbooks for intensive elective courses in Latin, Italian and Spanish have not yet been completed. In general the new textbooks have been well received.

Problems have on the other hand arisen from the fact that comprehensive teachers' books have not been completed. Although one brief teaching guide for each of the English, French and German textbooks was published two to three years later, they were of a nature and length which did not provide the degree of assistance the teachers expected, especially in the first few years. Plans to publish the desired and necessary teachers' books are slowly taking shape.

In the area of foreign language teaching, the number of lessons and type of syllabus can be seen in. The number and percentage of students studying foreign languages are shown in Tables 1 and 2a-g.

The present teaching of foreign languages at an intensity of two to three lessons a week is not commensurate with the long-range goals and needs of Hungarian society. Taking this into consideration, various additional possibilities for learning foreign languages in high school have been ensured:

i. Advanced classes can be formed in the first and second years for students who have attended special language classes in elementary school. Although the syllabuses and textbooks make it possible to increase the availability of this option, the schools still do not take advantage of this to the necessary extent as the students' previous language background is not a factor taken into consideration at the enrollment of elementary school students in high school.

ii. Students wishing to study a foreign language more intensively can attend special language classes. The number of special classes formed is determined by taking into account the number of students to be admitted to faculties at colleges or universities requiring an advanced knowledge of foreign languages.

Elective courses are not the optimal means in many respects to expand foreign language teaching. On the one hand, the teaching methods and syllabuses used are too complicated and diverse. On the other hand, second language electives are made optional in the third and fourth years and can be replaced by a vocational elective. It is an alarming warning sign that in the 1982/83 school year fewer third-year students /64.6%/ continued their studies of a second foreign language than in the previous school year /67.6%/

The new regulations governing the secondary school final examination have decidedly increased the importance of foreign language teaching. It is now compulsory for all students to take the final examination in a foreign languge of their choice, which, in keeping with the concepts of the new curricula, includes both a written and an oral examination. In 1983 55,5% /11,736/ of the students chose to take the final examination in Russian.

The relative proportion of the foreign languages chosen in high schools is not satisfactory as it represents neither the needs of the economy nor those of everyday life. The percentage of students choosing French and Spanish and even Polish, Italian and Latin is too small. /Latin and Esperanto can be chosen as a third language as well./

With the exception of schools for minorities, Hungarian high schools do not teach the languages of Hungary's neighbors /Serbo-Croatian, Czech, Slovakian, Romanian, Bulgarian/.

The most intensive type of Russian language teaching in Hungary is conducted at a high school in Budapest, where most subjects have been taught in Russian since 1974. With the help of teachers from the Soviet Union, not only is the Russian language and

literature taught in Russian but physics, biology, chemistry and, in Year 4, world history as well.

Secondary vocational schools

The new curricula were introduced in three stages from 1978 to 1980. The compilers of the new foreign language syllabuses for secondary vocational schools took into account those prepared for other schools as well as international trends in language teaching. In addition to the general requirements they also determined the special requirements of the various trades whenever possible.

A new syllabus and textbook were written for teaching Russian in 2 lessons a week, which in used by most secondary vocational schools. The syllabus represents a unified concept as regards goals, tasks, subject material and requriements. Separate supplements contain material specific to the various trades.

The teaching of Russian in secondary vocational schools focuses primarily on improving the students' oral skills, listening comprehension and reading comprehension, although only 2 lessons a week is not sufficient to fully accomplish this.

Other problems have also been encountered. Recorded tapes and slides are needed to supplement the subject marerial. Although work was begun on these at the time the new textbook was published, the A-V series for use in Year 1 was made available two years late in 1980 to only a portion of the schools as only a limited number of the series was produced. Problems in staffing and funding have also arisen, causing additional language teachers to leave the secondary vocational schools.

In cases where not only the language teacher works conscientiously and well, but the school administrators, the other teachers and the workshop all work towards improving the learning conditions, excellent results can be achieved. The language knowledge of an increasing percentage of the secondary vocational school students who participate in the national Russian language contest, who continue their studies at college or university or who apply for international scholarships is not inferior to that

of high school students. An increasing number of schools give a greater priority to external factors which can improve the effectiveness of language teaching such as dividing classes into small groups, expanding the collection of teaching aids and the library, better co-ordinating different subjects, increasing the opportunity for the students to practise the language /language camps, exchanges/ as well as better motivating students to learn languages.

The new "Regulations for Final Examinations for Secondary Vocational Schools" were introduced during the 1982/83 school year. The freedom to choose any foreign language in which to take the final examination at the end of secondary vocational school represents a great advancement over the past. However, this is also regarded by many as a sign of regression, especially by teachers of Russian in areas where up to now Russian was a "compulsory elective" at the final examination, whereas now it can only be chosen as an extra sixth or seventh subject.

Secondary technical schools for skilled workers

The government resolutions mentioned in the introduction do not deal with language teaching at secondary technical schools for skilled workers. Nevertheless, Hungary's international economic relations necessitate increased co-operation in the area of physical labor as well, as was stated in the resolution of the Economic Committee.

No foreign language instruction is provided in secondary-technical schools for skilled workers, with the exception of those training students for business and the catering trade. This means that a full one-third of the 15-17 year age group does not receive any foreign language instruction, although schools of this type employ teachers with language training. The foreign language study circle, which is intended to compensate for the lack of language teaching, has existed since 1980. In the first year 67 such study circles were formed throughout Hungary. The elimination of Saturday lessons has, however, hindered the expansion of their numbers.

New syllabuses have been compiled for the approximately 20,500 students of secondary technical schools for skilled workers in business and the catering trade which sets the goal that students should acquire the simple language communication skills necessary in their fields.

Teacher training and continuing education of teachers

In the past few years the curricula at the universities have been modified to place more emphasis on the acquiring of language proficiency and, to a lesser extent, on educational psychology. This has improved the level of language knowledge of future teachers. In addition to this, the students are also afforded the opportunity to study for one semester at East German or Soviet universities or, in the case of other languages to spend a shorter length of time at foreign universitics-All in all, the language training can be considered to be satisfacory.

The methodological training of language majors, on the other hand, is still inadequate. Since the number of lessons and importance placed on methodology at the universities is not satisfactory, it remains the task of continuing education courses to compensate for this. The greatest problem is seen in the fact that whenever possible language teachers do not seek employment in the public education system on graduating.

The main types of continuing education are the following:

1. The availability of continuing education seminars offered during the school year varies greatly from county to county. Compulsory seminars to be attended by all teachers are organized in all counties, but the availability of additional optional seminars depends greatly on local organizations, teachers and education supervisors. During the compulsory annual Continuing Education Days /1-2 days a year/ the important, overall issues of foreign language teaching are discussed, while the special seminars are devoted to the discussion of current specific problems. Complex methodological professional courses are also organized by several counties and the capital city of Budapest.

Although in theory it is the responsibility of the school's teachers' association to organize courses to convey and put into practice the methodological suggestions of education supervisors, in reality, the great majority of school teachers' associations do not fulfill this obligation.

2. Each summer 2-3 week intensive continuing education courses are organized by the National Pedagogical Institute for teachers of Russian, English, French and German in which native teachers also participate. These centrally-organized courses are attended by 40-120 teachers depending on the language. This is an especially important forum for teachers of English, who have decidedly fewer opportunities to practise the language in a natural setting than teachers of other languages.

3. Opportunities to study at continuing education courses offered abroad are, to varying degrees, available through international agreements to teachers of all languages.

i. Each year 75 secondary school Russian teachers attend a two-month continuing education course in Moscow. Difficulties have been encountered in filling the available places for several reasons. The shortage of language teachers in secondary schools in most cases makes it impossible to find substitute teachers. The great percentage of teachers are women, who, if they have children, are reluctant to leave their families for two months.

ii. A sufficient number of places are available to Hungarian teachers of German in courses offered in East Germany. However, as other opportunities also exist to practise the language, the numer of Hungarian participants in these courses has shown a steady decline.

What is to be done? Is there a concrete plan for improving language teaching in the schools?

As has been mentioned, a national plan does exist for the improving of language teaching in the schools. "Small steps" of this plan have been accomplished, but much unfinished work

remains to be carried out. Ignoring for the time being the long-range goals, the following immediate steps are recommended by the National Pedagogical Institute to correct the present deficiencies.

1. By the end of the present five-year plan, the percentage of elementary school students studying a second foreign language must reach 5%.

2. The blank spots observed in the map of the national distribution of elementary schools offering second foreign languages must be filled in.

3. The opportunity to choose between two foreign languages must be made available in at least several elementary schools in Budapest and other large cities.

4. In order to preserve the necessary proportion of languages studied, more elementary schools and secondary schools must be encouraged to offer classes in French, Spanish and Esperanto.

5. Several elementary schools must be given permission to form special classes in grades 3-8 in Serbo-Croatian, Romanian, Czech, Slovakian and Latin on an experimental basis.

6. The possibility for elementary school students to continue their language studies in secondary school must be increased through the consistent formation of advanced classes, perhaps even allowing a reduction in the present minimum class size of eight students.

7. As of the 1984/85 school year the present vocational elective taught in 3 lessons a week must be abolished, making it compulsory for 90% of the high school students to study a second language in Years 3 and 4 as well. The remaining 10% could elect to study languages in 2 lessons a week in addition to their vocational elective offered with 5-6 lessons a week.

8. The qualitative and quantitative factors involved in training elementary and secondary school language teachers must be adjusted to meet the present needs. The prestige of language teaching must be regained through increased moral and financial support.

9. The continuing education of teachers must be made to conform to modern requirements. One step towards this goal is to increase the effectiveness of continuing education for language teachers. The professional supervision of foreign language teaching must be completely revised to bring it to a satisfactory level. One basic step towards this goal is to establish the supervision of second foreign languge teaching in elementary schools.

10. New methods must be sought to expand and improve foreign language teaching which do not require a great increase in expense and which make better use of existing possibilities. The methods of private schools which achieve high results must also be analyzed. The possibility of introducing differentiated language teaching in the schools must be explored. /The financial contribution of the parents must also be considered in this respect. For example, modern supplementary materials could be sold, perhaps at cost, to the parents./

11. In light of the joint efforts involved in learning a language, the guiding of public opinion is absolutely essential. Not only the schools and institutions of public education must be convinced of its importance, but the parents as well. Important forums offering concrete help in this are the television, the radio, juvenile publications and TIT, a public education institution.

12. A comparison study must be made of the state language examination and the foreign language examination of the secondary school final examination before the two can be made equivalent. It is also worth considering whether the minimum age for taking the elementary level examination be lowered from 15 to 14.

Appendix

The past ten-year statistics of special language classes /Grades 3-8/*

	Number of schools				Number of classes				Number of students			
	72/73	80/81	81/82	82/83	72/73	80/81	81/82	82/83	72/73	80/81	81/82	82/83
RUSSIAN	224	216	242	273	1160	1151	1149	1383	25 455	26 234	25 877	28 488
ENGLISH	33	83	104	134	158	361	462	637	4 117	8 916	10 197	13 512
GERMAN	32	48	78	98	121	214	290	388	3 470	4 769	6 514	3 391
FRENCH	14	15	17	20	52	106	103	119	1 375	2 192	2 157	2 365
ESPERANTO	2	2	4	4	6	12	13	13	150	307	397	344
SPANISH	-	1	1	2	-	1	2	3	-	15	41	50
POLISH	-	1	1	1	-	1	2	3	-	27	54	100
ITALIAN	-	-	1	3	-	-	1	7	-	-	28	157
TOTAL	305	366	448	535	1497	1846	2022	2553	34 567	42 460	45 985	53 367

*Statistics taken from the "Elementary school education" and "Secondary school education" chapters of the Ministry of Education and Culture's statistical guidebooks published by the University Computer Center and the Institute for Academic Organization and Information Science

Table 1

Number of students studying Russian at high schools in 1982/83

	Compulsory lessons	Electives		Advanced classes	Special classes
		compulsory	optional		
Year 1	27 720	-	-	233 0,8%	689 2,5%
Year 2	24 278	-	1253 5,1%	232 0,9%	606 2,5%
Year 3	20 057	1593 7,9%	389 1,9%	-	544 2,7%
Year 4	18 723	1626 8,7%	251 1,3%	-	496 2,5%
		10,0%			
Total:	90 778	3219	1893	465	2335
Percent of total number of students:		8,3%	3,0%	0,9%	2,6%

Table 2/a

Number of students studying a second foreign language at high schools

English

	Compulsory	Electives					Advanced classes	Special classes
		Compulsory 3+3 lessons	2+3 lessons	5+6 lessons	Year 2-optional Years 3,4-compulsory and optional	Total		
Year 1	10 505 36,5%	-	-	-	-	-	495	529 1,8%
Year 2	9 594 38,1%	-	-	-	1713	-	373	475 1,9%
Year 3	-	4034	1451	665	427	6 577 29,0%	-	429 1,9%
Year 4	-	4021	1319	575	265	6 180 29,2%	-	373 1,8%
Total:	20 099	8055	2770	1240	692	12 757	868	1 806

Table 2b

Number of students studying a second foreign language at high schools

German

	Compulsory	Electives						
		Compulsory 3+3 lessons	2+3 lessons	5+6 lessons	Year 2-optional years 3,4-compulsory and optional	Total	Advanced classes	Special classes
Year 1	10 453 36,5%	-	-	-	-	-	310	212 0,7%
Year 2	8 995 36,8%	-	-	-	1317	-	156	121 0,8%
Year 3	-	3742	1070	288	243	5 343 23,6%	-	182 0,8%
Year 4	-	3900	1126	229	278	5 533 26,1%	-	116 0,5%
Total:	19 448	7642	2196	517	521	10 876	466	722

Table 2c

Number of students studying a second foreign language at high schools

French

	Compulsory	Electives						
		Compulsory 3+3 lessons	2+3 lessons	5+6 lessons	Year 2-optional years 3,4-compulsory and optional	Total	Advanced classes	Special classes
Year 1	2 622 9,1%	-	-	-	-	-	38	152 0,5%
Year 2	2 292 9,1%	-	-	-	364	-	22	132 0,5%
Year 3	-	942	337	64	73	1416 6,2%	-	121 0,5%
Year 4	-	848	300	44	31	1223 5,8%	-	112 0,5%
Total:	4 914	1790	637	108	104	2639	60	517

Table 2d

Number of students studying a second foreign language at high schools

Italian

	Compulsory	Electives						
		Compulsory 3+3 lessons	Compulsory 2+3 lessons	Compulsory 5+6 lessons	Year 2-optional years 3,4-compulsory and optional	Total	Advanced classes	Special classes
Year 1	419 1,5%	-	-	-	-	-	22	-
Year 2	391 1,5%	-	-	-	70	-	-	14
Year 3	-	210	38	44	13	305 1,3%	-	19
Year 4	-	228	72	27	-	327 1,5%	-	-
Total:	810	438	110	71	83	632	22	33

Table 2e

Number of students studying a second foreign language at high schools

Spanish

	Compulsory	Electives						
		Compulsory 3+3 lessons	Compulsory 2+3 lessons	Compulsory 5+6 lessons	Year 2-optional years 3,4-compulsory and optional	Total	Advanced classes	Special classes
Year 1	96 0,3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
Year 2	91 0,3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
Year 3	-	9	31	-	16	56	-	17
Year 4	-	21	53	-	16	90	-	-
Total:	187	30	84	-	32	146	-	61

Table 2f

Number of students studying a second foreign language at high schools

Latin

	Compolsory	Electives						
		Compolsory 3+3 lessons	Compolsory 2+3	Compolsory 5+6	Year 2-optional years 3,4-compulsory and optional	Optional years		Special classes
Year 1	1125 3,9%	-	-	-	-	-	1125	3,9%
Year 2	909 3,6%	-	-	-	-	251	1160	4,6%
Year 3	-	447	148	-	49	243	887	3,9%
Year 4	-	543	116	-	27	204	890	4,2%
Total:	2034	990	264	-	76	698	4062	

Table 2g

Miscellaneous languages: as an optional elective or special subject

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Polish	46	13	14	14	87
Esperanto	20	5	12	36	63
Classical Greek	7	-	-	-	7

Minority languages: taught in high schools for minorities

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Romanian	34	20	41	26	121
Slovakian	34	53	57	53	197
German	116	119	108	77	420
Serbo-Croatian	24	42	68	74	208

Summary

Of all high school students	35 530	/36,4%/	study English
	31 512	/32,3%/	study German
	8 130	/8,3%/	study French
	1 497	/1,5%/	study Italian
	394	/0,4%/	study Spanish
	4 062	/4,1%/	study Latin

/The totals do not include the number of students studying languages as an optional elective in Year 2 as these figures are also included under the heading "Compulsory lessons"./

Dr. Győző Sipőczy

FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN HUNGARY

I.

The economic structure of Hungary as well as numerous other factors stemming from its geographic location, small size and lack of natural resources place it among the ranks of countries to which foreign relations are of prime importance, especially in the field of economics, but in academic, cultural and social fields as well. Since the 1960's, Hungary's foreign relations have witnessed an overall rapid expansion, both as regards the number of countries and areas of interaction /economic, polictical. academic, cultural, etc./. Consequently, the areas in which the knowledge of one or more foreign languages is indispensable have increased and are continuing to increase at a rapid pace. Foreign languages have become an instrumental part of the work of an increasing proportion of the population.

For centuries, the teaching of foreign languages in the Hungarian school system was regarded primarily as a means to enriching the classical education of the students. The teaching of foreign languages focussed on the teaching of the skills which could then be used as a means to acquiring knowledge in the foreign language. The subject matter was limited almost exclusively to the grammar and vocabulary required to understand written texts and selected literary passages. This type of education placed very little emphasis on the skills necessary for establishing and maintaining personal contacts with foreigners, more specifically on listening comprehension and conversational skills.

Although in recent decades the importance of a practical knowledge of a foreign language did receive the proper emphasis in certain branches of higher education /notably at the University of Economics and the College of Foreign Trade/, the teaching of foreign languages in Hungarian elementary and Secondary schools for the most part failed to keep pace with the needs of society and the gap between "supply and demand" gradually widened. As a

result of this, both the number of people with an adequate knowledge of foreign languages and the average level of foreign language proficiency had become extremely insufficient by the end of the 70's. The repercussions of this situation were felt first of all in the areas of international economic relations and the increasing tourist trade. Difficulties began to arise in many areas, including the handling of exports, the establishing of joint international ventures, the proper handling of imports and the application of information obtained from special literature and documentation written in foreign languages. The lack of an adequate knowledge of foreign languages in many cases impeded the development of international economic and academic relations. Since the number of tasks to be carried out abroad had increased along with the development of international relations and the broadening of economic activities, a shortage of professionals capable of performing these tasks arose.

By the end of the 1970's it had become obvious that steps would have to be taken to facilitate the overall improvement of all areas of foreign language teaching in an effort to improve the foreign language proficiency of the Hungarian population, the inadequacy of which was impeding the socio-economical development of the country.

The resulting resolution passed by the Committee for Academic Policy of the Hungarian government in 1979 outlined the changes to be affected in the teaching of foreign languages throughout the entire educational system, from the elementary schools to adult courses with the objective of ameliorating the situation as quickly as possible.

The resolution divided the tasks involved in the improvement of foreign language teaching into two stages: the shortrange tasks, to be carried out by 1986, and the long-range objectives, to be realized by the 1990's.

Short-range objectives

1. Since the number of lessons in elementary and secondary school devoted to the teaching of foreign languages cannot be

significantly increased owing to restrictions in the curriculum, the teaching standards must be raised through the introduction of more effective methods, improved textbooks, teaching aids and other teaching materials as well as through the reduction of class size. The teaching of foreign languages must provide the students with the opportunity to acquire the practical skills needed to carry out the tasks set by society.

2. As regards higher education, all students completing university studies must be proficient in the language used in written and oral communication in one foreign language and must be able to read special literature pertinent to their field in at least one other.

3. As the effects of the changes introduced to raise the level of language teaching in the schools will only be felt by society after many long years despite the urgency of the social and economic needs of Hungary, the opportunity must be ensured for all adults of varying educational backgrounds to learn a foreign language outside of the school and in postgraduate courses. Institutions offering such language courses must be supported and their number must be increased as the need arises. The proper effectiveness of the teaching standards of these language courses must be ensured through professional assistance in the areas of curriculum and methodology and through adequate supervision. Improved textbooks, exercise books, and audio-visual aids must be published with these courses in mind.

4. On graduating from university or college language teachers must have a practical knowledge of the foreign language as well as a thorough knowledge of pedagogy, didactics and methodology necessary for their profession.

5. The number of translators and interpreters /scientific/ technical translators and interpreters/ must be increased in order to meet the needs of all areas of Hungarian society.

Long-range objectives

The implementation of the short-range reforms lays the foun-

dation for the realisation of the long-range objectives, the most important of which can be summarized as follows:

1. The reform of the Hungarian school system must in the long term result in all graduates of secondary schools possesing a working knowledge of the oral communication skills of one foreign language and a reading knowledge of a second.

2. University and college graduates must be proficient in two foreign languages to the extent required by their work and for their continuing professional development.

3. Language teachers must possess a proficiency in their chosen language which approaches that of a native speaker, including an adequate knowledge of both grammar and stylistics.

4. An adequate number of well-trained translators and interpreters must be ensured for all fields in all languages used on a world-wide basis who are able to meet the highest of standards.

Since the passing of the resolution in 1979 the appropriate ministries and national institutions have taken significant steps aimed at improving foreign language teaching in Hungary. These measures have already resulted in favorable changes in language teaching in and outside the school system, despite the relatively short length of time they have been in effect. In addition to the direct results, however, the indirect influence on society in the form of an increased interest in foreign languages can not be ignored. Since 1979 a multitude of articles have been published and opinions have been aired in newspapers and journals, on radio and television analyzing the present situation and the roots of the problems, summarizing the possibilities and offering concrete suggestions. It is to no small degree due to this that virtually all of society today is aware of the fact that in addition to specific knowledge of the professional field in question the knowledge of foreign languages is also absolutely essential in all stages of research, development, production and sales. It has been virtually universally recognized that scientific achievements, the manufacturing of

products which can compete on the world market, the export of industrial products, the import of foreign goods, the application of the results of international research and new production technologies, the propagation throughout the world of Hungarian achievements in the academic world and in general the unhindered continuation of foreign relations, an area of increasing importance to the economy and society, are all impossible to imagine without the adequate knowledge of foreign languages.

Despite the many obvious improvements, the fact cannot be ignored that the realization of certain objectives detailed in the resolution has fallen behind the original schedule. The reason for this delay lies in the economic difficulties encountered since the passing of the resolution in 1979. Taking into consideration the effect of these impeding factors, the deadline projected for the objectives outlined in the resolution, thought to be reasonable at the time, must be set a few years later than originally specified.

II.

In any attempt to describe, analyze and judge the present standards of foreign language teaching in Hungary, it must be kept in mind that the process of incorporating the concepts outlined in the above-mentioned resolution is already underway. As a comprehensive comparison of foreign language teaching prior to 1979 and today is beyond the scope of any one article, the following pages will be limited to a description of the present state, with references to the changes brought about by the passing of the resolution when deemed appropriate.

Elementary school /ages 6-14/

Study of the Russian language is compulsory in elementary schools in Hungary. Up to 1982 pupils in grades 5-8 /aged 10-14/ received instruction in Russian. Since 1982 this has been extended to include all 4th graders as well in order to allow the children to get used to learning a foreign language in a playful, colorful and enjoyable environment at an early age. The lessons of pupils

in grades 4-8, conducted according to a new and revised syllabus, number 2,3,3,3,3 per week respectively.

The dividing of classes into small groups for language lessons has not been accomplished to a satisfactory degree. Since 1983 the Ministry of Education and Culture has provided the necessary funds from the central budget to ensure the dividing for 1000 classes. These funds are sufficient to divide all classes containing 36-40 pupils into two groups. The dividing of classes with 31-35 pupils in generally made possible by the use of central funds allocated by the councils concerned. In addition to providing funds from the central budget, the Ministry of Education and Culture encourages the use of funds from different sources to divide classes. In order to better exploit the advantages inherent in smallgroup teaching, the National Pedagogical Institute /Országos Pedagógiai Intézet/, the central institution responsible for providing professional guidance in the field of education, has compiled a methodological guide, published in 1983.

The completion of the dividing of classes has been hindered primarily by the significant increase in the number of elementary school pupils in the 80's as compared with previous years. Consequently, although the number of classrooms has been greatly increased in recent years and continues to rise each year, these classrooms must for the most part be used to accommodate the increased number of pupils rather than to divide classes for foreign language lessons. The dividing of classes has also been impeded by the lack of sufficient language teachers. The difficulties mentioned here will continue to exist in the new few years to come. As a result, the dividing of all classes can only be accomplished at a much slower pace than originally planned and is not expected to be completed before the 1990's.

In addition to the compulsory lessons in the Russian language, special language classes can also be found in elementary schools in which pupils can learn Russian or a second foreign language from grade 3 /age 8/ on with an increased number of weekly lessons /3,3,5,5,5,5 in grades 3-8 respectively/. The most common second foreign languages taught are English and German: relatively

few schools offer French as a second foreign language.

Approximately 6-7% of all elementary school students attend special language classes. Although this figure represents a 100% increase over the last few years, it is still extremely small compared to the needs of society. Taking into consideration their later studies in secondary schools and institutions of higher education, 30% of all elementary school pupils should attend special language classes.

Although the Ministry of Education and Culture each year provides funds from the central budget to increase the number of special language classes /il 1983 the number of special classes in Russian was increased by 600, the number of special classes in a second foreign language was raised by 100 in grades 3 and 4 and by 200 in grades 5-8./, the progress in this area is still deemed unsatisfactory. This can be attributed to the demographic change mentioned earlier and the subsequent lack of classrooms as well as to the shortage of language teachers, especially acute in the case of second foreign languages. This is the primary reason why the geographic distribution of schools offering instruction in a second foreign language is extremely poor. The overwhelming majority of them are located in the capital city of Budapest, in county seats and large cities. Furthermore, even in schools offering a second foreign language, the choice of languages is very limited. The language offered in most instances depends not on the needs or desires of the pupils or their parents but rather on what language teacher happens to be employed by the school.

Since 1984 students ingrades 7 and 8 not attending special language classes have been able to choose a foreign language elective. The two lessons a week are merely sufficient to provide the students with a taste of the language they intend to study in secondary school.

The Ministry of Education and Culture does not plan any structural modifications for the next few years in the area of foreign language teaching in elementary schools. Consequently,

improvement in the effectivess of language teaching and an increase in the number of students studying a foreign language must be achieved through a more intensive use of the existing possibilities Language lessons offered before or after the regular school hours must be encouraged to a greater degree. All possible steps must be taken to support the activity of existing language study circles and language camps as well as to increase their number.

The new syllabuses on which the foreign language teaching in elementary schools is based differ in many respects from their predecessors. The Russian syllabus, for example, sets the goal that by the end of their elementary school years the students should have acquired a basic knowledge of the Russian language and should be proficient in the basic skills necessary for communicating in everyday situations. The syllabus also lays down the basic methodological rules involved in modern language teaching and calls for new textbooks and teaching aids to be developed and used which conform to these new concepts.

In accordance with this, the syllabus used in special Russian classes has been revised and the first textbook for special Russian classes is to be published in 1986. The basic concepts involved in the teaching of second foreign languages have also been laid nown and work has begun on the publication of textbooks and teaching aids which apply them.

Secondary school /ages 14-18/

The objective of foreign language teaching in the first year of secondary school, apart from the teaching of the specified subject matter, is also to bring the class up to a uniform level. This is true to a certain extent of all subjects in the first year of any school as the grades given at the previous level, in this case in elementary schools, vary depending on the customs, location of the school and the personality, standards and grading practice of the individual teachers, and cannot be relied upon to provide an accurate assessment of the students' knowledge.

In Hungary 20% of students in the 14-18 age group attend

high schools, the primary objective of which is to prepare the students for their studies at an institution of higher education. Lessons in the Russian language are compulsory, with 4,3,3,2 lessons a week in the four years respectively.

Students starting their second foreign language in high school have 3 lessons a week each year. For those students who have a large number of optional elective classes in vocational subjects, the second foreign language can be dropped after the first two years. Only 10-15% of the students choose this option, however; 85-90% of the students study two foreign languages all four years. Students who choose a foreign language as an elective subject in the third or fourth year have 5 lessons a week in Russian or a second foreign language.

Special advanced classes are offered in the first and second years of high school for students who attended special language classes in elementary school. The number of lessons a week in these classes is increased to 5. The Ministry of Education and Culture stipulates that advanced classes must be formed whenever at least 8 eligible students apply. As many high schools do not take the level of language proficiency achieved in elementary school into consideration at the entrance examination, many students are unable to continue their studies in advanced classes due to a lack of the required minimum number of students. This distressing situation can and must be alleviated, at least in larger cities, through better co-operation between schools.

Students preparing for a career requiring advanced knowledge of a foreign language can attend special language classes offering 8-9 lessons a week. The results achieved both in the elective and special language classes are encouraging. Many students from these classes pass the state language examination at the intermediate or even advanced level.

As of 1983 students are required to take both a written and oral examination in one foreign language as part of the secondary school final examination. /Previously this was optional./ It can reasonably be expected that as one foreign language is compulsory.

at the final examinations both the teachers and students will be compelled to prepare more thoroughly and intensively and in this way the differences in the effectiveness of foreign language teaching in the various schools will in future be minimalized.

In secondary vocational schools foreign language education is generally confined to the teaching of Russian in years 1-4 with 2 lessons a week, the effectiveness of which is not satisfactory, due primarily to the minimal number of lessons. In an attempt to compensate for this, special audio-visual aids have been prepared. Only in the secondary vocational schools for bussiness and the catering trade are two foreign languages compulsory. In addition to Russian, students may choose to study German, English or French.

On successfully completing a secondary vocational school, students take the secondary school final examination, which enables them to continue their studies at a college or university. As two languages are compulsory at universities, and the examination standards are set relatavely high, students who attended secondary vocational schools and learned only one foreign language with a minimal number of lessons are at a disadvantage compared with those who attended high schools. Lack of previous language preparation causes particulary serious problems at universities of technology, where approximately one half of the students attended secondary vocational schools.

In three-year secondary technical schools for skilled workers, with the exception of those for bussiness and the catering trade, no foreign languages are taught. It is a disquieting thought that in this way one-third of all students in the 15-17 year age group learn no foreign language at all. Since 1980 some secondary technical schools for skilled workers have organized foreign language study circles in an attempt to compensate somewhat for the lack of such education in the curriculum. However, compared to the total number of schools, the number of those offering this option is minimal.

For the time being the unsatisfactory state of foreign

language education in secondary technical schools for skilled workers cannot be improved through changes in the curriculum. Instead, in addition to study circles, the widespread organization of language courses must be encouraged and supported. As knowledge of a foreign language is of primary importance to skilled workers who intend to work abroad for any length of time, it is in the interest of large companies which contract for work abroad to provide assistance in organizing language courses in schools which train skilled workers in their fields.

The Ministry of Internal Trade has made the teaching of one foreign language compulsory in secondary technical schools which train skilled workers for business and the catering trade. The students in these schools may choose between English, German and Russian. Although the teaching staff and teaching conditions in these schools have greatly improved over the past few years, the language proficiency achieved by the students still falls short of the requirements.

The new foreign language syllabuses introduced in secondary schools during the period 1978-1982 have generally been well received. The changes in contents were designed primarily to promote the acquisition of practical skills necessary to communicate in everyday, real-life situations. Oral skills and listening comprehension are stressed, while neglecting neither written skills nor the importance of a foreign language as a means to gaining deeper insights into a foreign culture and its effect on the formation of the personality of the students.

Following the passing of the 1979 resolution on language teaching reforms, high schools and secondary vocational schools began to divide classes into small groups for language lessons. At present 80% of the students in secondary schools study languages in small groups. This process is hoped to be completed in the near future.

An important complement to the foreign language education in secondary schools is the foreign language camp. In recent years the number of schools organizing such camps has increased greatly.

At the same time, the number of languages involved has also risen. As of 1984, English, German, Italian, Russian and Slovakian language camps were in operation. Language camps in the Soviet Union continue to provide 300 students each year with the opportunity to learn a foreign language in its native country. In order to keep pace with the demand, plans have been completed to increase the number of camps operating in the Soviet Union.

At present more than ten languages are taught in Hungarian secondary schools. The relative popularity of these languages, however, is not commensurate with the needs of society. The vast majority of students elect to study English or German while too few choose French, Spanish or Italian. In recent years increased interest has been shown in the languages of Hungary's neighboring countries as well as in the Latin language.

In order to improve the effectiveness of foreign language teaching in secondary schools, the following measures would appear to be necessary:

1. The learning of a second foreign language should be made compulsory and one foreign language should be included in the final examinations for students attending secondary vocational schools, at least for those students who intend to continue their studies at institutions of higher education.

2. The relative popularity of the foreign languages taught should be made to conform more closely to the economic, social and cultural needs of Hungarian society.

3. All possible steps must be taken to minimalize the differences in the level of foreign language teaching found at individual schools.

4. It is recommended that the standard of the secondary school final examination approach that of the state language examination at the intermediate level. This would make it possible to exempt students having passed the state language examination from taking the foreign language examination at the end of their secondary school years. However, the equation of the two examinations is for the time being out of the question given the great discrepan-

cies found in foreign language teaching at various schools.

Higher education

Teacher training

The teaching of students majoring in any of six foreign languages /English, French, German, Italian, Russian or Spanish/ at the liberal arts faculties of Hungarian universities has been conducted according to revised curricula since September 1980. One integral part of the new curricula is that students majoring in German or Russian spend one semester studying in East Germany or the Soviet Union. At the end of the first year a selective examination is administered to all language majors. During the second and third years the students are instructed in the fundamental subjects of their fields, at the end of which there is a final examination. After the third year the students choose one of three areas to specialize in depending on whether they wish to become teachers, translators/interpreters or liberal arts scholars. /Previously the training remained the same throughout the university years./ The separating of the various branches of language studies provides university students with the opportunity to acquire a more thorough knowledge in the fourth and fifth years of the specific area in which they intend to work following their university years.

The Ministry of Education and Culture aims to extend the foreign language study opportunity available to students studying German and Russian to those majoring in other languages as well. Virtually all students majoring in Italian, for example, have the chance to study at summer school sessions at Italian universities. Students studying Spanish have the opportunity to study for one year at a Cuban university. The number of scholarships to Great Britain and France, is, however, very limited and must be greatly increased before all students studying English or French will have the opportunity to study abroad.

The long-range goal according to which the proficiency of all foreign language teachers should approach that of a native speaker

by the 1990's cannot be achieved within the present university system requiring two majors. One solution - at least for subjects which are widely taught in secondary schools - would be to allow students to major in only one subject, enabling them to receive twice as many lessons in their major fields.

Foreign language requirements for non-majors

The urgent need for experts in all fields with a firm knowledge of foreign languages necessitated the immediate introduction of changes in the university training of non-language majors which would make it possible for these students to begin their careers in 1985 with the foreign language proficiency specified in the short-term plan.

As the positive effect of the steps taken to improve foreign language education in elementary and secondary schools will be visible only years from now at the university level, the immediate changes in the higher education system had to take into consideration the fact that for the next few years to come the task of improving the students' knowledge of the Russian language will fall to the universities and colleges. In the case of a second foreign language, many students who attended secondary vocational schools will still begin their studies at the university.

Since 1981 foreign language teaching at Hungarian universities and colleges has incorporated the short-term goals specified in the resolution, taking into consideration the feasibility of the changes involved. This modified plan specifies that university students must study two foreign languages for 8 semesters with at least 3 lessons per week. A professional reading knowledge and basic conversational skills in both general and professional subjects must be attained in one foreign language and a professional reading knowledge and advanced conversational skills must be attained in a second, one of which must be Russian. At colleges, at least 2 lessons in Russian a week are required for 4 semesters. The goal is to provide the students with the ability to read special literature pertinent to their fields and to speak about

general and professional topics at an elementary level.

Final examinations in foreign languages are given at the end of students' language training, the passing of which is a prerequisite for the continuation of their studies. /Prior to 1981 foreign language teaching was restricted to the reading of professional texts in 2 lessons a week./

In addition to the required language lessons, universities and colleges offer elective courses primarily for students who studied no second foreign language in secondary school or whose knowledge of Russian is very limited. Moreover, university students interested in improving their knowledge may study in special intensive classes to prepare themselves to take the state language examination or may participate in scientific/technical translating courses. In the latter, relatively advanced general and professional conversational skills are acquired in addition to the skills needed for translating. Studies show that the number of university students who pass the state language examination at the intermediate or in rare cases the advanced level increases from year to year. Courses preparing students for the state language examination are also offered at various colleges. /Some universities and colleges encourage students to improve their knowledge of foreign languages by rewarding those students who pass the state language examination with bonuses or higher scholarships. This innovation should not be ignored and can serve as an example to other colleges and universities./ Students who pass the examination given at the end of the special translating course receive a special certificate attesting to this fact in addition to their degree. Experience shows that these students are very sought after on the job market. It is in part due to this that interest in scientific/technical translating courses has increased at universities.

Since the introduction of the new curricula in language education, the foreign language proficiency of university and college students has increased - albeit modestly - and the prestige of foreign languages has also increased.

Language courses /adult education/

Given the fact that foreign language teaching in the schools has not been able to keep pace with and as is obvious from the above will not be able to keep pace in the near future with the increased demand for experts with a knowledge of foreign languages, it is natural that the number of adults attending various foreign language courses has especially in the last 10-15 years increased significantly along with the increased importance of foreign relations in Hungary. Present estimates place the number of adults who sacrifice hundreds of hours of their free time to learn a foreign language which for the vast majority is needed in their work at 100,000 /.002% of the work force!/.

The number of courses offered by the various ministries, state organizations, companies, institutes and cultural centers has - especially in the past five years - increased along with the rise in demand for adult language courses. In addition to these, private language schools also exist and many teachers give private lessons as well. Obviously, it is impossible to co-ordinate and supervise this extensive network. Consequently, great diversity in the teaching material, pedagogical methods, standards and results can be found among the courses and individuals teaching foreign languages. As central co-ordination and supervision are out of the question, solutions must be found which directly promote more uniform, effective adult language teaching. Above all, the number of courses which provide satisfactory results and which are properly supervised must be increased to such an extent that no one must be forced to choose a less effective alternative because of a lack of space.

In Hungary employers may renumerate employees with a knowledge of a foreign language which is necessary in their work by offering a foreign language allowance. This knowledge is attested to by the passing of a state language examination. In certain cases, employers may stipulate the passing of such an examination as a prerequisite for employment. As a result of this,

the vast majority of adults learning foreign languages intend to take the examination. In order to promote and aid in more efficient and uniform preparation for the state language examination, the Adult Foreign Language Teaching Center /Idegennyelvi Továbbképzõ Központ/ of the Loránd Eötvös University of Arts and Sciences, which houses the State Language Examination Committee, has started to prepare a wide variety of teaching materials /textbooks, audio-visual teaching aids, exercise books, etc./ which correspond to the various levels of the language examinations. Many parts of this series, designed to aid the teaching and learning of the most commonly taught languages, have already been published or will be completed in the coming years.

In spite of the undeniable shortcomings to be found in the area of adult language courses, an improvement has been noticed over the past few years. A gradual increase in the number of examinees who pass the state language examination has been observed. Taking into consideration the fact that since the beginning of the 80's 12-13,000 adults have taken the examination each year, a 1-2% increase in the number of those who pass represent a continual increase in the number of adults who have a knowledge of a foreign language which both they as individuals and society can profit from.

Courses in translating and interpreting

A great number of translators and interpreters are needed to work in all areas of business, research, cultural and foreign relations; many more than exist at present. This very real need can and must be met in part by special elective courses offered during university years, and in part by post-graduate courses. In order to achieve this goal, such courses now offered at several universities must be increased.

III.

In addition to the concrete reforms introduced as a result of the resolution concerning, foreign languages passed in 1979

by the Committee for Academic Policy, one undeniable result is that the issue of foreign language proficiency has become the focus of attention throughout Hungarian society. This is of extreme importance especially for the future, as the great tasks still to be carried out in the area of foreign language education can only be accomplished with the combined and continuous co-operation of teachers, parents, experts in foreign language teaching and the government, state and social institutions responsible for co-ordinating foreign language education in Hungary.

Dr. Jenő Bárdos

STATE LANGUAGE EXAMINATIONS IN HUNGARY
A SURVEY ON LEVELS, REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS

I. INTRODUCTION

The State Language examination: General Information

In Hungary the examination designed to test foreign language proficiency, the State Language Examination, is regulated by resolution no. 3/1980./X.25/MM of the Ministry of Education and Culture, which states that anyone over 15 years of age may apply to take the state language examination, and in the event he passes will receive a certificate testifying to his knowledge at the Elementary, Intermediate or Advanced level.

The elementary examination, consisting only of an oral examination, is administered on a pass-fail system, with the examinee given either a "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" mark. To pass the intermediate level examination, the examinee must obtain a 3.0 average of the 7 grades given /5 at the oral examination, 2 for the written examination/. /The grading system used in Hungary is the following scale of grades 1-5: 5=excellent, 4=fair, 3=average, 2=satisfactory, 1=unsatisfactory./ To pass the advanced level examination, a 4.0 average of the 9 grades given /7 at the oral, 2 for the written examination/ must be obtained.

Those examinees whose grades do not include an "unsatisfactory" /1/ but who do not attain the minimum average required for the advanced/intermediate level may receive the intermediate/elementary level certificate if their grade average meets the requirements for the lower level certificate. The reverse, however, is not true. Due to the differences between the various examinations, the examinee cannot receive a higher level certificate than the one applied for even if his score meets the minimum requirements.

On request the examinations may be supplemented with special professional terminology from various fields. In this case the number of subjects is increased but the average needed to pass remains the same.

The highly unique possibility exists in Hungary for employers who have passed the state language examination at the intermadiate or advenced level. The monthly amount of this allowance is regulated by the Ministry of Finance.

In the almost three decades of its existence the state language examination has slowly taken its present form, shaped by the changing methodology and objectives of the times. The relative frequency of the languages chosen by the examinees has also changed along with the needs of society. At present the most popular languages are English, German, Russian, French and Spanish, in decreasing order. Examinations can also be taken in the languages spoken in the countries bordering Hungary /Slovakian, Serbo-Croatian, Romanian, etc./ as well as in languages rarely studied in Hungary /Norwegian, Chinese, Arabic, etc./. The following table shows the number of applications for examinations in the four most popular languages for the years 1981 and 1982.

Language	Level					
	Elementary		Intermediate		Advanced	
	1981	1982	1981	1982	1981	1982
English	560	870	3460	3360	1430	1400
German	750	980	1800	1820	1250	1200
Russian	270	360	1010	1070	650	460
French	130	80	400	470	320	320

Figure 1.

State language examinations are administered by the State Language Examination Committee /SLEC/ and the Language Examination Section of the Adult Foreign Language Teaching Center under the supervision of the Rector of the Loránd Eötvös University of Arts and Sciences /ELTE/. The SLEC compiles the examination material and is responsible professionally, while the Language

Examination Section is in charge of the administrative aspects involved. The SLEC, the members of which are appointed by the Rector, is led by the Chairman with the help of five Vice-chairmen representing the five major languages. The members of the Committee are by profession language teachers, or in the case of examiners from the various professions, experts with a high proficiency in the foreign language they test. These experts are delegated by the education departments of the respective ministries. If they are not found to be satisfactory, their appointments can be revoked by the chairman or vice-chairmen.

Intermediate and advanced level examinations are held during three examination periods each year /January-February, May-June, October-November/; elementary level examinations can be taken during four months of the year /March, July, September, December/.

The SLEC is also in charge of administering examinations for the National Scholarship Council in order to assess the language proficiency of applicants for international scholarships. Since 1985 all applicants wishing to obtain a postdoctoral degree from the Academy of Sciences must pass state language examinations in two languages, one at the elementary level and one at the intermediate level. /Previously these examinations were administered under the auspices of the Academy./

What is tested?

Albeit it has not yet been determined exactly what constitutes "knowwing"a language, the state language examination in its everyday practice measures and evaluates language skills which are undoubtedly essential elements of language knowledge. To put in more simply, it must be judged whether the examinee understands the language and can make himself understood in that language. In other words, whether he exhibits theoretical and practical proficiency in the given language, especially in the area of speech, as well as whether he gives evidence of being capable of effective language performance.

The four traditional basic skills /listening, speaking, reading, writing/ and the two complex skills /translating,

interpreting/ can be grouped into the following three categories of functional skills:

1. Comprehension /i.e. listening and reading comprehension/
2. Communication /i.e. monologues, conversation, composition writing/
3. Mediation /i.e. relaying the thoughts of others in the form of translating or interpreting/

Under the present system of the state language examination not all possible elements of functional skills are tested /for example: composition writing, interpretation into Hungarian/.

For true communication to occur these functions must be interdependent, as without comprehension there is no communication and without comprehension and communication, mediation cannot take place. This interdependence is illustrated by the following diagrams:

COMPREHENSION Speaker

COMMUNICATION Speaker

MEDIATION Person A Speaker Person B

Diagram 1.

Comprehension
Communication
Mediation

Diagram 2.

With this in mind, the objectives and requirements of the three levels /elementary, intermediate, advanced/ of the state language examination will be outlined in the introduction. The objective of the state language examination is to test foreign language knowledge in light of its usefulness to society. We can speak of a useful knowledge of a foreign language if the following conditions are fulfilled:

A. At the elementary level: the examinee comprehends the essence of a message conveyed to him in the foreign language by a Hungarian or other speaker /or by means of a tape, sign, etc./ in a simple everyday situation and reacts appropriately in the foreign language and can express himself in this stiuation in a way which a non-Hungarian would understand. An active vocabulary of approximately 1500 words and a passive vocabulary of approximately 2000 words is required. A language knowledge of this level can be used for working abroad or when receiving foreign guests in Hungary /for example in the catering trade and other service areas/.

B. At the intermediate level: the examinee understands questions and information concerning personal matters or topics of general interest conveyed to him in the foreign language either orally or by other mechanical means of communication taking into consideration the examinee's occupation, social status and educational background. The examinee must react in an appropriate way and must be able to communicate orally in the language at an acceptable speed and with an acceptable accent without committing errors which would render his speech/ message unintelligible. His basic knowledge of the grammar enables him to summarize a text in the foreign language, to translate correctly into Hungarian with the help of a dictionary a simple text in the foreign language which does not require detailed knowledge of a specific field or of the culture and civilization on the country where the foreign language is spoken. He is to give a summary in Hungarian of a general newspaper article without a dictionary and with minimal assistance. An active vocabulary of 2500-3000 words is supposed along with a passive vocabulary of 3000-3500 words. A language knowledge of this level, in addition to those mentioned earlier, can be applied in the following areas: filling out forms, library work, typing, corresponding in the foreign language following sample letters, acting as a tourist guide receiving foreign guests, studying abroad, translating texts pertaining to one's profession, conducting business negotiations with foreign partners, etc.

C. At the advanced level: the examinee satisfies the criteria

outlined for the intermediatel level but has a broader vocabulary and speaks with greater fluency. He must be able to translate any general text written in the foreign language or Hungarian with the help of a dictionary and must be able to relay /interpret/ without a dictionary the contents of a text written in Hungarian or a message given orally in the foreign language. An active vocabulary of 3000-4000 words and a passive vocabulary of 4000-5000 words are supposed. In addition to those mentioned earlier, a language knowledge at the advanced level can be applied in the following areas: translating into Hungarian /not including literary translating/, negotiating at a higher level with native speakers, conducting business correspondence unaided, etc.

The following chapters describe the format and length of the state language examinations, the subject areas and the grading system.

II. THE FORMAT OF THE STATE LANGUAGE EXAMINATION

1. General language examinations

A. Elementary Level

Oral examination

Format: Conversation

The examiners ask the examinee questions from any of the specified topics and converse with him. Following this, the examinee must say a few sentences on his own about a topic specified by the examiners. Finally, the examinee chooses a slip of paper at random, on which a situation is given in Hugarian which he must act out with the examiner as his partner.

The performance of the examinee is graded on the following skills:

1. Listening comprehension
2. Oral skills
3. Grammar

The examinee is graded on a pass-fail system, receiving either a "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" rating.

B. Intermediate Level

a. Written examination /total time allotted: 3 hours/

Format:

1. Structure and written expression /90 minutes/

In state language examinations for English, German, Russian, French and Spanish this part consists of multiple choice questions, sentences to be translated from Hungarian into the target language and occasionally other types of exercises designed to test the grammatical and lexical knowledge of the examinee.

In the case of other languages, this part of the examination consists solely of a greater number of sentences /ca 150-175 words/ to be translated into the target language.

During this part of the examination, dictionaries and other aids cannot be used.

2. Translation from the foreign language into Hungarian /90 minutes/

This part of the examination consists of a general text in the foreign language /150-175 words/ to be translated into Hungarian with the aid of a dictionary.

b. Oral examination

Format:

1. Conversation

The examiners first get to know the examinee by asking questions about him and general topics of interest, in this way intitiating a two-way conversation. Following this, the examinee speaks for a few minutes about a topic chosen by the examiners.

2. Summary in Hungarian of a text recorded in the foreign language

The examinee reads aloud a general text written /60-80 words/ in the foreign language and gives a detailed summary of the contents in Hungarian. He may reread the text to himself and may ask the words he is unfamiliar with.

The performance of the examinee is graded in the following areas:

1. Listening comprehension

2. Lexical knowledge /on the certificate - Oral skills/
3. Grammar
4. Pronunciation, intonation
5. Summary in Hungarian of a text written in the foreign language /on the certificate: Reading comprehension in foreign language/

C. Advanced Level

a. Written examination /total time allotment: 4 hours/

Format:

1. Translation from the foreign language into Hungarian

The examinee translates a general text of 250-275 words from the foreign language into Hungarian. Dictionaries may be used.

2. Translation from Hungarian into the foreign language

The examinee translates a general text of 150-157 words from Hungarian into the foreign language. Dictionaries may be used.

b. Oral examination

Format:

1. Conversation /same as at intermediate level/

2. Summary in Hungarian of a text recorded in the foreign language

The examinee hears a short story recorded in the foreign language which he must summarize in detail in the foreign language.

3. Summary in the foreign language of spoken Hungarian sentences

The examinee summarizes in the foreign language the contents of several sentences spoken in Hungarian.

4. Detailed summary in Hungarian of a text written in the foreign language /same as at intermediate level/

5. Summary in the foreign language of the contents of a written Hungarian text

The examinee summarizes the contents in the foreign language of a written Hungarian text of approximately 60 words in length.

Grades

1. Listening comprehension
2. Lexical knowledge /on the certificate: Oral skills/
3. Grammar
4. Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, intonation /on the certificate: Pronunciation, intonation/
5. Summary in Hungarian of a text written in the foreign language /on the certificate: Reading comprehension in foreign language/
6. Summary in the foreign language of a written Hungarian text /on the certificate: Interpretation in foreign language of Hungarian text/
7. Summary in the foreign language of a spoken Hungarian text /on the certificate: Interpretation in foreign language of spoken Hungarian text/

2. Special language examinations /supplemented with professional terminology/

A. Elementary Level

Oral examination

Format:

1. Conversation /same as for general language examination/

2. Professional conversation

The examiners and examinee converse briefly about a topic pertaining to the examinee's profession, followed by a short speech /a few sentences/ on the part of the examinee about a similar topic.

The performance of the examinee is judged according to the following skills:

1. General listening comprehension
2. Professional listening comprehension
3. General oral skills
4. Professional oral skills
5. Grammar

Grading: same as for general examination

B. Intermediate Level

a. Written examination /total time allotment: 3 hours/
Format:

1. Structure and written expression /same as for general examination/

2. Translation into Hungarian of a text containing professional terminology in the foreign language

The examinee translates a text in the foreign language 150-175 words/ containing professional terminology from his field into Hungarian. Dictionaries may be used.

b. Oral examination
Format:

1. Conversation /same as for general examination/

2. Conversation and a short speech on a topic pertaining to the examinee's profession

3. Summary in Hungarian of a general text recorded in the foreign language /same as for general examination/

4. Detailed summary in Hungarian of a general text written in the foreign language /same as for general examination/

5. Summary in Hungarian of a professional text written in the foreign language

The examinee must summarize in Hungarian the contents of a written text of 60-80 words containing professional terminology.

Grades

1. Listening comprehension
2. General lexical knowledge /in the certificate: General oral skills
3. Professional lexical knowledge /in the certificate: Professional oral skills/
4. Grammer
5. Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, intonation /in the certificate:

Pronunciation, intonation/

6. Summary in Hungarian of a general text written in the foreign language /in the certificate: General reading comprehension in foreign language/
7. Summary in Hungarian of a professional text written in the foreign language /in the certificate: /Professional reading comprehension in foreign language/

C. Advanced Level

a. Written examination /total time allotment: 4 hours/
Format:

1. Translation from Hungarian into the foreign language of a general text /same as for general examination/
Dictionaries may be used.

2. Translation from the foreign language into Hungarian of a text containing professional terminology /with the exception of foreign trade examinations/
The examinee translates a text of 250-275 words with the help of a dictionary.

3. Detailed summary or condensation in the foreign language of a text or foreign trade correspondence in Hungarian containing professional terminology /for foreign trade examinations only; time allotted: 100 minutes/
The text, chosen at the discretion of the supervising authorities, contains 250-275 words. Dictionaries or other aids may not be used on this part of the examination.

b. Oral examination
Format:

1. Conversation /same as for general examination/
2. Conversation and short speech on a topic pertaining to the examinee's profession
3. Summary in Hungarian of a general text recorded in the foreign language /same as for general examination/

4. Summary in the foreign language of a professional text spoken in Hungarian

   The examinee summarizes in the foreign language the contents of a few sentences spoken in Hungarian pertaining to his profession.

5. Detailed summary in Hungarian of a general text written in the foreign language /same as for general examination/

6. Detailed summary in Hungarian of a professional text written in the foreign language

   The text contains approximately 60-80 words.

7. Summary in the foreign language of a professional text written in Hungarian

   The text contains approximately 60-80 words.

Grades

1. Listening comprehension
2. General lexical knowledge /in the certificate: General oral skills/
3. Professional lexical knowledge /in the certificate: Professional oral skills/
4. Grammar
5. Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, intonation /in the certificate: Pronunciation, intonation/
6. Summary in Hungarian of a general text written in the foreign language /in the certificate: General reading comprehension in foreign language/
7. Summary in Hungarian of a professional text written in the foreign language /in the certificate: Professional reading comprehension in foreign language/
8. Summary in the foreign language of a professional text written in Hungarian /in the certificate: Summary of professional Hungarian text/
9. Summary in the foreign language of a professional text spoken in Hungarian /in the certificate: Summary of spoken Hungarian professional text/

The following chapter presents the topics used in the oral examinations.

III. LIST OF TOPICS RECOMMENDED FOR PREPARATION FOR THE ORAL EXAMINATION

A. Elementary Level

1. Meeting people /introductions, greetings/
2. The family /the examinee's particulars and his family/
3. Place of residence /the examinee's address, short description of his place of residence and the neighborhood/
4. Work /the examinee's occupation, work, job responsibilities/
5. Study /the examinee's language knowledge, language learning/
6. Public transportation /taking the tram, bus, subway; buying tickets, validating tickets, departure and arrival, routes/
7. Taking a taxi /calling for a cab, giving the address, paying/
8. Driving a car /parking, buying gas, car repairs/
9. Traveling /by train, by air, by long-distance bus, at a train station, buying a ticket, departure, the route, arrival/
10. Traveling abroad /at a travel agency, passport control and customs, changing money/
11. The post office /sending a letter and a telegram/
12. The telephone /how to use the phone, making a phone call/
13. Accommodations /staying at a hotel, private room, or camping site, reserving a room, arrival, filling in information sheet, using various services, departure/
14. Eating out /reserving a table, ordering, main foods, dishes and beverages, paying/
15. Having company /greeting guests, making introductions, offering food and drinks, expected behavior/
16. Shopping /in a department store, in small shops, at supermarkets, main foods, names of articles of clothing and household goods/
17. At the movies, at the theater /what's on, reserving tickets, buying tickets/
18. At the doctor's /common symptoms, and illnesses/
19. Sports /favorite sports to watch and participate in/

20. The weather, the weather forecast
21. Setting up dates and appointments
22. Asking and giving information
23. Requests, consent, refusals
24. Agreeing, disagreeing

B. Intermediate and Advanced Levels

The individual and the family
/Intermediate and advanced levels/

1. Introductions /based on the information in the examinee's identity card/
2. The family /family members, relatives/. Description of physical appearance and character of family members.
3. Family life /a day in the life of the family/
4. Holidays, family celebrations /greetings and customs/
5. The joys and problems of bringing up children
6. Child-care facilities /nursery schools, day-care centers, etc./
7. The problems of working women/mothers
8. Time and labor-saving devices in the home

/Advanced level/

1. The family and society /large vs. small families/
2. The ideal marriage
3. The joint role of the family and the school in bringing up children
4. The special problems of the elderly and the youth of society
5. Organizing the household, the sharing of work and responsibility among the members of the family

The home
/Intermediate and advanced levels/

1. Place of residence /area of the city, town, types of buildings, services, health, cultural, sport and entertainment facilities/
2. The building where you live /location, neighborhood, modern vs. outdated/

3. The home /size, layout, furnishings, heating, lighting, decorations, etc./
4. How to make your home more modern, comfortable and pleasant

/Advanced level/

1. The housing shortage in Hungary, possible solutions /for individuals and society/, types of apartments
2. The advantages and disadvantages of new residential areas, housing complexes
3. Health, architectural and esthetic demands made on the home today

On the job

/Intermediate and advanced levels/

1. Occupation, employer, specific duies
2. A day at work
3. Types of occupations
4. Employment opportunities, jobs most in demand

/Advanced level/

1. Choosing a career: interest, aptitude, ability, career counseling
2. Blue vs. white collar jobs
3. General satisfaction, personal problems, discipline and democracy on the job
4. Salary, supplementary income /extra work, odd jobs, overtime/, standard of living
5. Labor problems, labor migration
6. Equality of women at work and in public life
7. Protecting the rights of workers, accident prevention

Meals

/Intermediate and advanced levels/

1. At home: breakfast, lunch and supper, main foods and dishes
2. At work
3. Advantages and disadvantages of eating at home vs. in restaurants

4. Entertaining
5. The catering trade /restaurants, fast-food restaurants, coffee shops, etc./

/Advanced level/

1. Eating nutritiously
2. Hungarian eating habits, characteristics of Hungarian cuisine
3. Eating habits and characteristic cuisine of the country where the foreign language is spoken

Services and shops

/Intermediate and advanced levels/

1. Main consumer services /home delivery of goods, repair services, cleaner's, hairdresser's, etc./
2. The postal service /mailing letters, packages, sending telegrams and money, subscribing to magazines, etc./. The telephone /how to make a local, long-distance call/
3. Types of shops /traditional, self-service, supermarkets, department stores, etc./ and their various functions
4. Daily and weekend shopping
5. Buying major consumer products /the installment plan, on sale/
6. Buying ready-made clothes vs. custom-made clothes, main types of clothing and material, advantages and disadvantages of each

/Advanced level/

1. The bank, main services offered the public
2. Insurance
3. Sensible clothing vs. fashion
4. Supply of goods, service, quality /in the eyes of the buyer and the seller/

Health, sports, the weather

/Intermediate and advanced levels/

1. Medical care, district doctors, specialists, hospitals, sanatoriums
2. A visit to the district doctor or a specialist

3. Most common illnesses and their symptoms
4. Popular sports in Hungary and abroad
5. Sports facilities in Hungary, amateur and professional sports
6. International sports events /the Olympics, world championships, etc./
7. Summer vacations, outings, domestic tourism, camping
8. The weather

/Advenced level/

1. Social services /health care, sick pay, welfare services, vacationing facilities, retirement pensions, etc./. Comparison with social services offered in the country where the foreign language is spoken
2. The dangers of smoking, alcoholism, indiscriminate use of drugs
3. Environmental protection
4. Description of one particular sport or sports event
5. Benefits and importance of sports
6. A healthy life-style

Transportation

/Intermediate and advanced levels/

1. Types of public transportation and their use
2. Description of one particular trip
3. Transportation problems, rush hour
4. Giving directions

/Advanced level/

1. Responsibilities of drivers and pedestrians
2. Safety on the roads, most common accidents
3. Ideas for an improved transportation system
4. The role of the automobile in the life of today, driving

Entertainment

/Intermediate and Advanced levels/

1. Leisure time activities /the movies, the theater television, the radio, reading, listening to music/
2. One particular book, tv or radio program
3. The role of television, main types of programs
4. The role of radio, main types of popular programs, favorite program
5. A night at the theater or at a concert
6. Newspapers, magazines, how to use the library
7. Opportunities and goals of learning languages /at a course, on your own/
8. Your friends, how to make friends
9. Your favorite pastime

/Advanced level/

1. The role of books, the theater, concerts and films in the age of radio and television
2. Detailed description of a book, film, concert, play, tv or radio program you have read, seen or listened to
3. Hobbies
4. Your favorite writer, composer, director, painter, sculptor
5. Educational cultural facilities: museums, cultural houses
6. Cultural life in the city vs. in the country, of the place where you live

Traveling

/Intermediate and advanced levels/

1. Detailed description of a trip /on business, through a travel agency, a private trip, visit to friends/
2. How to arrange a trip abroad /getting a passport, necessary travel documents, visas, foreign currency/
3. Advantages and disadvantages of the various means of transportation /traveling by train, ship, plane, bus/, buying tickets, timetables, departure, changing, arrival, etc.
4. Planning the route, getting ready for the trip /necessary shopping, packing/
5. Accommodations /hotel, private room, etc./

6. Custuoms and passport control

/Advanced level/

1. Main geographical features and historical landmarks of the country where the foreign language is spoken
2. Main characteristics of cultural life in the country where the foreign language is spoken
3. Main economic and social features of the country where the foreign language is spoken

Hungary

/Intermediate and advanced levels/

1. Geography /climate, setting, area, population/
2. Hungarian industry /state-owned companies, co-operatives, private companies, main industrial products
3. Agriculture, main agricultural products
4. Educational system, types of schools
5. Main state holidays and how to celebrate them
6. Main historical landmarks in Budapest and the surrounding area or where you live
7. A sightseeing tour of Budapest or an important city in the country

/Advanced level/

1. Structure of Hungarian society, government offices and their resonsiblities, important institutions and public organizations
2. International relations /political, economic, adacemic, cultural/
3. Educational and cultural policy in Hungary
4. The arts in Hungary

The following chapter describes the methodology used in the state language examination, the criteria and special features of the examination. It also compares the subject areas tested in the Hungarian state language examination and in several English language examinations for foreigners.

IV. THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STATE LANGUAGE EXAMINATION

The role of methodology in the examination

The structure and administration of an examination is determined by examination methodology. Examination methodology consolidates the techniques and methods which ensure the physical administration of and the specific contents of an examination and can be divided into two areas: form and content. The formal aspects are determined by the resolutions pertaining to the examination, by administrative limitations and by the spacial and temporal criteria needed to make the physical administration of the examination possible. The criteria determining content are governed by the specific branch of methodology pertaining to the given subject area /didactics/ and the theoretical and practical methods of measuring and evaluating used in teaching /in our case as they apply to foreign language teaching/. Its most important borderline terriories are applied /educational/ psychology, ethics, general theory of evaluation, mathematical statistics and teaching techniques. In light of the above, the structure of the methodology of language examinations is the following:

I. Examing techniques

1. Methods for assessing language knowledge

A. Methods and techniques for written examinations: objective multiple choice tests, test including several types of exercises, dictation, condensation, translation, composition writing, etc.; their effectivess in a given examination; the various stages involved in compiling and correcting the test material; types of errors, etc. /The primary virtue required of examiners in this area is thoroughness./

B. Methods for oral examinations: conversation, reading comprehension, translating and interpreting. /The main criteria of good examining technique: good questioning technique, the ability to improvise, a profound knowledge of the language, decisiveness./

2. Methods of quantitative and qualitative evaluation

A. Quantiative methods: sampling, ranking, ranging, scoring, weighting, marking, and the simple statistical methods used in teaching, i.e. representative analysis, data processing, methods of calculating averages, distribution and significance.

B. Qualitative methods: the scale, criteria and requirements of a given examination and the comparison of these with the examinee's performance.

II. Examination technology

The description and usage of technical equipment used during the examination, the furnishing of the examination rooms, lighting, noise reduction, as well as the standard symbols used in correcting written examinations, uniform filling out of forms, etc.

III. Examination psychology and ethics

The psyche and the examination, anxiety and fear, does the examination influence the personality?, stage fright, apathy, stamina, etc. Analysis of the ethical behavior of the examiner in light of the expected behavior norms of the examinee.

IV. Examination administration

The laws applying to the examination, the administrative process, the necessary paperwork, from the filling out of the application blank to the keeping of records, the assigning of examiners and rooms, etc.

More will be said on the broad topic of examination methodology in the description of the importance of evaluation. First, however, the nature and criteria of the language examination must be explained in greater detail.

The nature of the language examination

The state language examination attempts to assess the level of language knowledge of the examinee. To put this in everyday terms, it determines whether the examinee understands and can

make himself understood in the foreign language. In other words, whether he exhibits theoretical and practical proficiency in the given language, expecially in the area of speech, as well as whether he gives evidence of being capable of effective language performance. In order to demonstrate to what a great extent this examination differs from those used in everyday teaching in order to provide the students with feeddack and a means to check their knowledge, the following characteristics can be mentioned:

1. Summative in character: This means, given the dichotomy of formative and summative evaluations, that the state language examination is not meant to play a role in the teaching process as a means of correcting errors or providing direct feedback. Rather it is the complex assessment of the results achieved through a learning-teaching process unfamiliar to the examiner.

2. Qualitative in character. During the assessing process, the examining commitee strives to evaluate the language knowledge of the examinee objectively, systematically, thoroughly and fastidiously, varying examining techniques as needed. After all, the subject area being assessed may be given a rating on quality and quantity from a wide scale. In the end, however, it comes down to only two choices: the examinee has either met the requirements or not. The binary character of this evaluation can be written in qualitative form as 0 or 1 /the alternative system, for. ex. "Pass" or "Fail"/. The fact that at most language examinations a scale is used /the measuring system, for ex. /0/, 1,2,3,....,n/ should not confuse the issue as the minimum number of points at which the certificate is awarded is determined for each examination. This could be illustrated in the following way: 1,2,....,P, ...,n /evaluating system, P=pass/. The examinee may of course pass by a smaller or great margin as there is a certain degree of tolerance as regards the pass value. This is illustrated in Figure 2.

MIN. TOLERANCE MAX.

REQUIREMENTS

PASS

Of the three systems discussed /alternative, measuring and evaluating/, the evaluating system incorporates the features of the other two, which could lead one to conclude that the evaluating system incorporates a measuring system. However, this does not mean that a qualitative /value/ judgement should be made on the basis of quantiative features. Rather, quantitative manifestations do exist of qualitative features, which can in fact be measured. The advantage of measuring in this way is that a more detailed, precise assessment can be obtained, which can be stated in numbers. /To oversimplify somewhat, the dialectics of quantity vs. quality can be exemplified by a simple scale as well./ It is, for example, a common occurrance at the language examination that while the examinee, on the rocky road to language proficiency, is well-advanced in the area of "quantitative accumulation", he has managed to statisfy the qualitative requirements in only one or two areas.

3. Criterium-oriented

As opposed to normative examinations, criterium-oriented examinations do not compare the performance of the given examinee to that of another /or to a given teaching material, school system, previous results, etc./ but instead the examinee is compared to one or more constant criteria. These criteria are in reality scales, with each step representing a predetermined level of achievement. This scale is based on a proven or assumed similarity in the process by which various individuals acquire language knowledge and language proficiency. Obviously, this creates the need for an objective description of the various levels of language knowledge.

4. Totality

In the history of the evaluating of foreign language knowledge, there have been periods in which quantitative factors gained favor and, with relevant linguistic and metodological substantiation, language knowledge was broken down into its minute elements: for example, individual sounds and isolated words were taken out of context and tested. Although test of

this nature may be valuable in certain instances and can highlight qualitative deficiencies as well, mere sum of these analytic features cannot be considered to be the same as language proficiency as this artificial isolation occurs only "in vitro". For this reason, although phonetics, vocabulary, grammatical structures and rules are still tested as a part of language knowledge, they are tested as the elements, substance and means of speech.

Thus, if language is to be examined in a broader perspective as one element of actual speech, the function of which is communication, and if we regard this as a system, in which a concept can exist only in a situation, then it becomes obvious that a situation must be created, with the speakers playing their roles /sociological, sexual, psychological, etc./, for language to have any meaning. Is it any wonder then that such criteria can be observed in language examinations throughout the world which test the "survival" ability of the examinee in given situations? In other words, not only language proficiency, but communicative proficiency is also required.

It must be noted that school traditionally adhere to the "elemental" type of examination as opposed to the "total". What is even more dangerous, however, is that this encourages students to merely acquire knowledge /interiorization/, although especially in the area of language skills, the application of this knowledge /exteriorization/ is far more important and difficult to achieve as it is qualitatively different.

Reproduction test based on recognition and immediate use of language elements are of little value in an overall assessment of the examinee's skills /to know and to be able to use something are two different things/.

5. Usefulness to society

On the one hand, society is today in need of people with advanced oral skills such as those required at conferences or in interpreting, a progression from the formerly acceptable level of language used by guides, for example. On the other hand, society also requires correct, stylistically

advanced written skills to be used in a variety of areas ranging from letter writing to traslating from and into foreign languages. Consequently, the state language examination plæes greater emphasis on oral skills and the number of special examinations has increased.

Are the criteria absolute?

The constancy of the criteria is a function of the objectivity of the description of the language. Taking into consideration the fact that a completely objective description has not yet been achieved, there exists an element of variability among the examination criteria stemming from the changing demands put on language knowledge. By this token, the language proficiency /hence a language examination certificate/ is of 10-15 years ago is today obsolete. At one time a broad knowledge of the elements of a language and an ability to translate was the maximum demand put on language knowledge. Today Hungary has developed to the point where this level is considered merely average. The following compares the various skills tested by well-known English language examiniations and the Hungarian state language examination.

EXAMINATIONS	PRONUNCIATION	GRAMMAR	VOCABULARY	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	READING COMPREHENSION	READING IN A LOUD VOICE	CONVERSATION	SITUATIONS	COMPOSITION WRITING	DICTATION	CONDENSATION	TRANSLATION L_2-L_1	TRANSLATION L_1-L_2	INTERPRETATION
CAMBRIDGE FIRST		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
CAMBRIDGE PROFICIENCY		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	
LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - ELEMENTARY		X							X		X			
LCC - HIGHER					X		X		X		X			
LCC - IND.+COMMERCE				X			X	X						
RSA /ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS		X		X			X		X					
ARELS ORAL		X		X	X		X	X						
PITMAN - INTERMEDIATE		X		X					X	X				
PITMAN - ADVANCED		X		X			X	X	X	X	X			
TRINITY COLLEGE EXAMINATION		X			X	X	X							
INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS				X			X		X					
IL - FINAL				X			X		X					X
ESB /ENGLISH SPEAKING BOARD/				X	X		X							
EPTB	X	X			X									
ELBA		X	X	X	X									
TOEFL		X	X	X	X									
ALI/GU		X	X	X	X									
ELTDU			X	X	X		X	X	X					
ELEMENTARY LEVEL				X			X	X						
INTERMEDIATE LEVEL	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X		
ADVANCED LEVEL	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X	X	X

STANDARD TEST BATTERIES

HUNGARIAN STATE LANGUAGE EXAMINATION

1. Points or grades are given in these subject areas.
2. Functions given a different name but corresponding to those listed above have been included in the appropriate categories.
3. The category labeled "COMPOSITION WRITING" can include written description, story-telling, letter writing or essay writing.
4. The category labeled "SITUATIONS" may mean the ability to react quickly and appropriately in a given situation and/or role playing in a given situation.
5. The category labeled "CONVERSATION" can include monologues as well.

Figure 3. Comparison of subject areas tested by English and Hungarian language examinations.

Language examination methods and criteria

If on the one hand we examine a relatively complete list of methods for testing traditional language skills, we realize that there are a great number and variety of these.

1. Testing grammar: sentence transformation, arranging words in correct order, asking and answering questions, completing sentences, combining sentences, multiple choice tests, etc.
2. Testing vocabulary: multiple choice test, finding synonyms, completion, word formation, word association, etc.
3. Testing listening comprehension: testing individual sounds, rhythm and intonation, multiple choice tests, narration, dictation, interpretation, etc.
4. Testing reading comprehension: answering questions, matching, true and false tests, cloze tests, etc.
5. Testing oral skills: guided and free conversation, independent speaking /monologues/, role play, simulation, etc.
6. Testing writing skills: copying, description from memory, note-taking, dictation, completing a text, guided and free composition writing, condensation, translation, etc.

If on the other hand we examine the criteria generally used on language examinations /in this case on English and Hungarian

language examinations/, we find that certain criteria occur very rarely, others with surprising frequency. This could lead us to suppose that several methods can be used in testing a given criterium and that they are chosen at random. As specific methods do not exist to test this supposition, we can only assert the hypothesis that this is merely an illusion, and that in reality the criterium to be tested itself dictates the most efficient method for its testing and evaluation. In other words, adequate examination methods exist for the individual skills. /For example, compared to other methods the multiple choice test is a significantly better method for testing the examinee's knowledge of the elements of the language, but is indifferent in testing communicative skills./

The following chapter describes the present system used in of the most important area of examination methodology: evaluation.

V. EVALUATION: THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP

The guiding principle in the area of evaluation is that both the examiners rate each subject area separately and after comparing the marks come to a consensus concerning the final grades. Experience has shown that the examiner who does not ask the questions better recalls the various parts of the examination. This is less apparent in the case of experienced teachers, to whom it is natural to monitor the speech of others while they themselves are speaking.

1. Evaluation and grading at the oral examination

A. Listening comprehension

a. The examinee is graded on the level of comprehension exhibited throughout the entire examination, with the comprehension of the taped story counting for one half of the grade.

b. The following scale is so general that there is no need to separate the intermediate from the advanced level examination. The level of comprehension or non-comprehension remains constant: the input /the story or dialogue and the speech of

the examiner/ must, however, be decidedly more difficult at the advanced level.

GRADES	DESCRIPTION
1. /unsatisfactory/	With the exception of a few isolated words, the examinee does not unterstand the tape. During the conversation he does not understand the questions even after having them repeated slowly. Often it is impossible to make him understand certain ideas. All in all, there is no communication.
2. /satisfactory/	The examinee understands isolated parts of sentences and a few complete sentences but cannot understand the connections between them, or only with difficulty. He does not grasp the story as a whole but merely as unconnected fragments. During the conversation questions must often be repeated and even so at times a stalemate is reached where communication breaks down.
3. /average/	The examinee understands the essence of the entire story but cannot understand correctly approximately one-fourht of it. During the conversation he understands slow speech well but has difficulties at normal speed. Minor problems in comprehension are still frequent.
4. /fair/	The examinee completely understands the entire story with the exception of one or two minor details. He understands virtually everything spoken at a normal speed. Minor problems in comprehension may occur, but these are

	primarily the result of realistic misunderstandigs in the target language.
5. /excellent/	The examinee completely understands everything in the story and during the conversation.

B. Oral skills

1. The examinee is graded on his ability to make himself understood in the foreign language. It is here that he is rated on his lexical knowledge as well. Primarily the vocabulary used in everyday conversation is assessed as his abstract vocabulary is most often tested during the summary of the newspaper article.
2. This is also where the examinee is graded on his fluency, an area which has not yet been analyzed systematically enough. The justification for including this can be exemplified by the well-known fact that while a native speaker will tolerate a foreigner who speaks with many grammatical errors, he will turn his back on one who fails to communicate due to his slowness of speech.

GRADES	DESCRIPTION
1. /unsatisfactory/	The examinee says only a few sentences or fractions of sentences interspersed with long pauses, making it unbearable for a native speaker. What he does say is for the most part unintelligible.
2. /satisfactory/	The examinee speaks very slowly, but with tolerable pauses. He can express his basic needs with a great number of grammatical errors.
3. /average/	The examinee does not lose the train of thought during the conversation and can express himself clearly with frequent pauses. Faulty word usage

	occurs often.
4. /fair/	Intermediate level: The examinee expresses himself fluently without searching for words but faulty word usage still occurs. Advanced level: The examinee uses everyday language effortlessly and speaks fluently with almost no mistakes. However, he has trouble with complex, idiomatic expressions and avoids abstract areas.
5. /excellent/	Intermediate level: The examinee is quite at home in the world of everyday language and speaks fluently without mistakes. Advanced level: The examinee speaks fluently without mistakes. He uses complex idiomatic expressions easily, speaking at the normal speed of a native speaker. He can speak fluently on abstract topics, although he may not use special terminology.

C. Grammar

1. It is extremely difficult, it not impossible, to separate grammar from vocabulary. In actuality the examiner strives to form a global picture of the extent to which the grammatical structure of the language has developed from an end in itself to a tool.
2. The following scale is too general and can and must be made more language specific.

GRADES	DESCRIPTION
1. /unsatisfactory/	The examinee is not familiar with the fundamental structures of the language.
2. /satisfactory/	The examinee is familiar with the fundamental structures of the language

	but cannot use them automatically and makes frequent mistakes.
3. /average/	The examinee uses the fundamental structures correctly and automatically but frequent errors still occur.
4. /fair/	The examinee uses his knowledge of the grammar automatically as a tool, with only minor errors.
5. /excellent/	The examinee uses the grammar automatically and fleuntly with virtually no mistakes.

D. Pronunciation

The overriding principles governing the grading of pronunciation are.

a. The examinee may not be punished for having a foreign accent unless it renders his speech unintelligible.

b. The examinee cannot be judged according to a standard created in Hungary or other countries which is nonetheless unacceptable to a native speaker.

It is immediately apparent that these two principles work against each other yet are not contradictory.

GRADES	DESCRIPTION
1. /unsatisfactory/	The examinee's pronunciation makes communication impossible.
2. /satisfactory/	The examinee's pronunciation consists of non-native /in this case Hungarian/ sounds and intonation. Communication is difficult due to the strong accent.
3. /average/	The examinee has a strong Hungarian accent and intonation, but stresses words correctly. Communication is possible with some difficulties.
4. /fair/	Intermediate level: The examinee has a slight accent but uses correct, distinct stress and for the most part

	correct intonation.
5. /excellent/	Advanced level: The examinee has a faint accent which those who do not speak the language cannot distinguish from the accent of a native speaker. Intermediate level: The examinee has a faint accent which non-native speakers cannot detect. Advanced level: The examinee's pronunciation sounds authentic and approaches that of a native speaker, who could merely determine that he has an accent but could not place where he is from.

E. Summary in Hungarian of a text written in the foreign language

This exercise in reading comprehension entails the summary in Hungarian of a text of approximately 60-80 words. Considering that standard language textbooks do not teach the vocabulary and grammatical structures typical of everyday newspaper articles, the grading scale is relatively general in this case too. As the texts used must clearly reflect the difference between the intermediate and advanced level examinations /for example at the advanced level they contain more complicated structures and idiomatic expressions and require a wider vocabulary/, the examiree's ability to understand and summarize the article remains the same. For this reason a common scale is given below for the two levels.

GRADES	DESCRIPTION
1. /unsatisfactory/	The examinee is unable to translate the text. On encountering unfamiliar words he flounders and cannot continue the summary even with extensive help. He is unable to summarize approximately one half of the text, the most common reason for which is that he is not familiar with three or

four to six key words.

2. /satisfactory/ The examinee can summarize the entire text with assistance but without assistance does not understand approximately one-third of the text or grossly ministerprets it. The source of the misunderstanding is usually approximately two to four unfamiliar major grammatical structures and/or three to five unfamiliar key words.

3. /average/ The examinee is able to summarize the text almost entirely on his own with only minimal assistance. On the first attempt there is at most one major misinterpretation /not to exceed one-fourth of the text./ This is due to one to three unfalmiliar important grammatical structures and/or two to three unknown key words.

4. /fair/ The examinee is able to summarize the entire text on his own without assistance. There are no misinterpretations and only minor stylistic errors. The examinee is uncertain of at most one important grammatical structure and/or one to three key words.

5. /excellent/ The examinee summarizes the entire text in detail on his own without assistance. Ha demonstrates competence as well as a feeling for style.

F. Summary in the foreign language of a text written in Hungarian

The examinee must render a Hungarian text of approximately 60 words in length in the foreign language. This exercise falls somewhere in between an exercise in translation, comprehension and interpretation as the examinee is not required to

give a word for word rendering of the text.

GRADES	DESCRIPTION
1. /unsatisfactory/	The examinee is unable to render the contents of the text. His attempts in the foreign language are unintelligible Although he may succeed in part, at least one half of the text cannot be understood.
2. /satisfactory/	The examinee is able to summarize two-thirds of the text with, however, numerous errors in grammar and style. His summary reveals a limited vocabulary.
3. /average/	The examinee is able to summarize three-quarters of the text with a few grammatical errors but numerous errors in style. The remaining one-fourth of the text presents primarily lexical problems and with assistance the examinee is able to render the entire text.
4. /fair/	The examinee is able to render the entire text on his own with few grammatical and lexical problems, but numerous mistakes in style still occur.
5. /excellent/	The examinee renders the entire text on his own with virtually no errors and in a manner true to the style of the foreign language.

2. Evaluating and grading the written examination /The technical problems involved in the correcting of the written examinations

Although a firm knowledge of the language is essential in the correcting of the written examinations, the roughness and meticulousness are also indispensable criteria. A standard

marking system is also a necessary component. Widely-accepted correction symbols are used to indicate faulty punctuation, missing elements, closing up of words, etc. Improper style is indicated by drawing a dotter or wavy line under the words or sentences in question. The correctors often mark major errors by underlining them twice. Unintelligible sentences are indicated by a straight or wavy vertical line drawn in the margin. Numbering the major errors in the margin facilitates the grading.

A. The correction of the intermediate level tests

At present the tests at the intermediate level consist of 50 multiple choice questions and approximately 10 Hungarian sentences /60-80 words/ to be translated into the foreign language without a dictionary. Each correct answer on the multiple choice part is worth 1 point, for a maximum total of 50. An additional 50 points can be received in the case of a perfect translation of the sentences. Considering that the total number of points must equal 50 but that all sentences may not be equally difficult, an appropriate point system is worked out in each case. This means that one sentence may be worth only 3 points, whereas another may be worth 7. The results obtained on both parts are added together and graded according to the following scale: excellent = 85-100, fair=75-84, average=65-74, statisfactory=51-64, unsatisfactory=0-50.

B. Translation into Hungarian

This exercise tests whether the examinee is able to understand an unfamiliar original text written in the foreign language and whether he is able to render its "informational value" /the sum of the information given/ in his native tongue: to communicate correctly the thoughts of others. On the one hand the examinee is judged according to how well he was able to render the intent of the author and the informational value of the text and, on the other hand, according to how well he was able to retain the original style while conforming to the norms and standard usage of Hungarian. It must be stressed

that despite the strict requirements placed on the examinee, the objective is to judge his language knowledge. A professional literary translation is not expenced.

Errors

Major errors are those which distort the informational value of the original text. Any error which can be misconstrued in a given situation is considered an informational error. It is considered to be a major error if the translation contradicts or distorts the meaning of the text as a whole or if information has been omitted in the translation. It is not considered to be a major error if the translation is merely too general or too specific due to a poor choice of expressions. The following types of errors can be distinguished, which can in the given situation be informational errors as well.

a. Errors in form /spelling, punctuation, etc./
b. Errors in grammar /incorrect usage of grammatical structures/
   Lexical errors /incorrect word usage or poor choice of synonyms/
   Errors in style /inappropriate use of language functions and register/.
c. Inability to translate /unintelligible, confused translation/

The thoughts reflected above can also be summarized by grouping the inability to translate, major informational errors and omissions together as qualitative errors, while the various other errors in form, grammar, vocabulary and style can be considered quantitative errors. Again from a different point of view it can be asserted that there is a cause and effect relationship between types of errors /in form, grammar, vocabulary and style/ and informational errors. That is to say, all informational errors can be traced back to their roots in the errors described above under a and b. However, the reverse is not necessarily true. Not all such errors lead to information errors /the cause does not necessarily produce the effect/.

This supports the earlier distinction between quantitative vs. qualitative errors. Given the seriousness of informational /qualitative/ errors, in the correcting of the translation the grade is lowered approximately one grade for each such error. In the case of serious omissions or unitelligible sentences, the grade is lowered once for each line of text.

GRADES	DESCRIPTION
1. /unsatisfactory/	The examinee has omitted more than four lines of the text or more than four lines are impossible to understand. In the case of a completed translation there are at least four major discrepancies between the original and the translation /or an equal number of other errors occurs/.
2. /satisfactory/	The examinee has produced an adequate translation of the major part of the text /at least two-thirds/ although it is dotted with numerous errors in grammar and style and contains at most two or three major informational errors.
3. /average/	The examinee has satisfactorily translated at least three-quarters of the contents of the original text with only minor discrepancies in unimportant areas. There are few errors in form and grammar but numerous minor stylistic errors. At most the translation contains one major discrepancy.
4. /fair/	The examinee has rendered virtually the entire text with only minor errors in style. However, the translation in spots sounds unnatural and does not flow smoothly enough.

5. /excellent/	The examinee has completely rendered the informational value of the original text in correct Hungarian style using the appropriate register. In only one to two instances does he fail to use the most appropriate expression, resorting to wordy alternatives.

C. Translation into the foreign language

This exercise test whether the examinee has mastered the structures of the foreign language and whether, with the help of a dictionary, he is able to apply the rules of grammar, usage, spelling and punctuation. On the whole, however, the examiree is judged on how well he is able to render the informational value of the original text in the foreign language. The overall clarity and smoothness of the translation, taking the norms of composition style in the foreign language into consideration, is a more important criterium than occasional minor errors in form and grammar. As opposed to translating into Hungarian, the examinee is not required to have completely mastered the style of the foreign language or to render all the minor details of the text into the foreign language.

GRADES	DESCRIPTION
1. /unsatisfactory/	The examinee has failed to include more than four lines of the text or more than four lines are confused and unintelligible. If he has completed it, the translation is incoherent and unintelligible. It contains at least four or five major discrepancies and a multitude of errors in form, grammar and style.
2. /satisfactory/	The major portion of the examinee's translation would be correctly understood by a native speaker of the

foreign language, although at times with difficulty. The translation contains numerous grammatical and stylistic errors but transmits the essence of the original text with at most three or four major discrepancies.

3. /average/ The examinee has rendered the essence of the original text but the translation is often awkward or unnatural and the examinee has resorted often to the dictionary in the selection of words. There are several errors in form, grammar and word usage but no more than two or three major discrepancies.

4. /fair/ The examinee has transmitted virtually the entire contents of the original text. He conforms to standard language usage but at times fails to use the most appropriate expressions or structures. He has a firm knowledge of the overall structure of the language and commits few errors in style. There is at most one major discrepancy.

5. /excellent/ The examinee has rendered the entire informational value of the original text in the foreign language, conforming to standard language usage and style. The translation is clear and reads smoothly with at most one or two minor discrepancies.

The examiner is required to correct the entire translation, even if it is clear at the very beginning that the translation is not satisfactory. Identical errors occurring throughout the translation are counted only once.

VI. THE ROLE OF THE STATE LANGUAGE EXAMINATION IN HUNGARY

In the midst of the endless, primarily critical, debates surrounding language teaching in Hungary, it is grafitying to see the number of language examinations rise from year to year. It can be asserted with confidence that the language examination is not only the barometer of a specific need of society, but a sensitive gauge of the effectiveness of language teaching in Hungary. The Adult Foreign Language Teaching Center can be viewed as a screening center, the possible errors of which have immediate financial repercussions.

While keeping an eye to the key domain of the future, the international flow of information, the Center has an undeniable effect on the teaching of foreign languages in Hungary. In its work with the state language examinations, for example, the Center has pioneered research on the testing of language skills /for example, multiple choice tests, comprehension tests, etc./. In order to assist students in preparing for the examination, the Center has also written textbooks in several languages for various levels and has prepared recorded material, slides and video tapes to be used in teaching. It has published a collection of sample situations used at the elementary level examination and a collection of sample questions asked at the examinatons. A collection of exercises in translating and sample intermediate level tests has also been published in the five most common languages. Furthermore, the use of recorded texts to determine the level of listening comprehension at the oral examination has promoted the use of tape recorders in foreign language teaching throughout Hungary. The integrated testing of language skills practised at the language examination indirectly prevents language teachers from becoming the victims of fashionable but one-sided methods. All in all, as long as the state language examination continues to select well-founded methods to achieve its goals, it will retain its role as assessor and course-setter for foreign language teaching in Hungary.